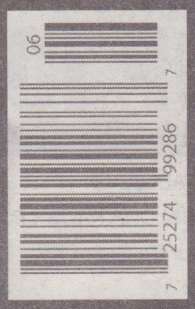
#325
June 2010



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BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE:
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For what it's worth, here's some of the MRR reviewers' current Top 10 (or so) things we've reviewed this month.

TOP 10

MARIAM BASTANI

- SLICES-Cruising-LP
- TUBERCULOSIS-EP / RAYOS X-EP
- KIELTOLAKI-LP / KYLMA SOTA-LP
- MANIPULATION-Violence-EP
- DAYLIGHT ROBBERY-Through the Confusion-LP
- BROWN SUGAR-tape / ENDTABLES-LP
- INSERVIBLES-EP / V/A-BARCELONA KÄOS-LP
- LA VOZ-EP+live / ILEGAL-Error De Orden-EP
- BLACK BUG-LP / DAILY VOID-12"
- JIGS UP-live / USELESS CHILDREN-live

BRACE BELDEN

- BAYONETTES-Guilty Pleasure/Outta My Mind-45
- EAST BAY GREASE-Just Head-EP
- YOUNG GOVERNOR-Call Me When the Cat Dies-45
- ROYAL HEADACHE-Splash/Surprise-45
- RAYOS X-Mi Desorden-EP
- USELESS EATERS-Panic Attack/Death View-45
- BLACK MAMBA BEAT-LP
- DAILY VOID-The Eclipse of 1453-12"
- ILEGAL-Error De Orden-EP
- PEOPLE'S TEMPLE-You Don't Know-EP

TIM BROOKS

- YOUNG GOVERNOR-Call Me When the Cat Dies-45
- BURNNG LOVE-Lives of the Saints-EP
- LA VOZ-Deprimido-EP
- TUBERCULOSIS-Disfrasandose-EP
- RAYOS X-Mi Desorden-EP
- ILEGAL-Error De Orden-EP
- KVORTERINGEN-Samhällets Förrädare-LP
- DAYLIGHT ROBBERY-Through the Confusion-LP
- THUG-LP
- KIELTOLAKI-LP

ROBERT COLLINS

- ICE NINE-Nobody's Son-EP
- V/A-PIG HEART TRANSPLANT/JUHYO-EP
- ROGERNOMIX-EP
- GET RAD-I Can Always Live-LP
- SICK 'EM/JIGS UP-live
- DAYLIGHT ROBBERY-Through the Confusion-LP
- SOCIETY NURSE-Junk Existence-EP
- EL BANDA-Skutki Uboczne-2xLP
- ILEGAL-Error De Orden-EP
- DIET COKEHEADS-both EPs

DOUGIE

- BRUCE ROEHRS-everything
- YOUNG GOVERNOR-Call Me When the Cat Dies-45
- WHITE MYSTERY-LP
- DAMN LASER VAMPIRES-Gotham Beggars...-CD
- TRANZMITORS/AIRFIX KITS-live
- THE MINDS-Knifed!-EP
- LEGENDARY WINGS-Did You Just Eat That-45
- STATUES-New People Make Us Nervous-LP
- CRUSADERS OF LOVE-Never Grow Up-LP
- MARVELOUS DARLINGS-Teenage Targets-45

LAYLA GIBBON

- SLICES-Cruising-LP
- ENDTABLES-LP
- TUBERCULOSIS-Disfrasandose-EP
- DAYLIGHT ROBBERY-Through the Confusion-LP
- SOCIETY NURSE-Junk Existence-EP
- INSERVIBLES-Nada-EP
- RAYOS X-Mi Desorden-EP / La Voz-Deprimido-EP
- DIET COKEHEADS-both EPs / HOMOSTUPIDS-EP
- ILEGAL-Error De Orden-EP
- USELESS CHILDREN-EP / MOGEL-CD

BOB GOLDIE

- DEATH FIRST-Rock Camp-EP
- CRUSADERS OF LOVE-Never Grow Up-LP
- SINKS-Don't Need You-EP
- THIEVES-Positive Vibrations-EP
- MARVELOUS DARLINGS-Teenage Targets-45
- STATUES-New People Make Us Nervous-LP
- ILEGAL-Error De Orden-EP
- MANIPULATION-Violence-EP
- LA VOZ-Deprimido-EP
- SUBHUMANS-Same Thoughts Different Day-LP

KENNY KAOS

- SUPERIOR UNITS-Take Her in the Classroom-EP
- SLIPPERY SLOPES-Sad Tugs-EP
- BROKEN PATTERNS-Germs-EP
- STATUES-New People Make Us Nervous-LP
- CRUSADERS OF LOVE-Never Grow Up-LP
- MARVELOUS DARLINGS-Teenage Targets-45
- SINKS-Don't Need You-EP
- THE MINDS-Knifed!-EP
- BAYONETTES-Guilty Pleasure/Outta My Mind-45
- UNWED TEENAGE MOTHERS-If That's Love-EP

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TOP 10

Please send two copies of vinyl, CD-only, or demo releases to the address on the previous page

CAROLYN KEDDY

- TY SEGALL-Ceasar/Bullet Proof Nothing-45
- USELESS EATERS-Panic Attack/Death View-45
- SLIPPERY SLOPES-Sad Tugs-EP
- LA CORDE-Back in Salem/Urban Burqa-45
- PEOPLE'S TEMPLE-You Don't Know-EP
- WHITE MYSTERY-LP / THE MINDS-Knifed!-EP
- FOLDED SHIRT-Eleven and a Bucket-EP
- HOOKERS-Horror Rises From the Tombs-45
- DAILY VOID-The Eclipse of 1453-12"
- ENDTABLES-LP / TRANZMITORS-live

RAY LUJAN

- MCRACKINS-It Ain't Over Easy-CD
- STATUES-New People Make Us Nervous-LP
- MARVELOUS DARLINGS-Teenage Targets-45
- BROKEN WATER-Whet-LP
- FLATLINERS-Calvacade-LP
- LYCKA TILL-CD
- COBRA!-Hello-CD
- CREDENTIALS-Routines-LP
- YOUNG GENERALS-EP / SUBHUMANS-LP
- MARBLES!-CD/MENZINGER-CD

MARK MURRMANN

- ENDTABLES-LP
- KVORTERINGEN-Samhällets Förrädare-LP
- DIET COKEHEADS-Jons/Sepentine-45
- DIET COKEHEADS-High Country-45
- CONDOMINIUM-Gag-EP
- GG KING-Babbling Voices/Insomnia-45
- THE MINDS-Knifed!-EP
- USELESS EATERS-Panic Attack/Death View-45
- HOMOSTUPIDS-Night Deacon-EP
- BAD TASTE-I Was A Teenage Jack the Ripper-EP

BRUCE ROEHRS

"Everywhere working class men and women continue their struggle..."
RIP Bruce Roehrs 1950-2010

KEN SANDERSON

- KVORTERINGEN-Samhällets Förrädare-LP
- KIELTOLAKI-Massahypnoosi-LP
- UNKIND-Yhteiskunnan Pikkuvkoja-LP
- SOCIETY NURSE-Junk Existence-EP
- RAYOS X-Mi Desorden-EP
- SLICES-Cruising-LP / V/A-Brutality in Seconds-LP
- CONDOMINIUM-Gag-EP
- POSITIVE NOISe/XTRA VOMIT-split EP
- ILEGAL-EP / APPALACHIAN TERROR UNIT-LP
- EL BANDA-Skutki Uboczne-2xLP

FRED SCHRUNK

- EL BANDA-Skutki Uboczne-2xLP
- DEAD WIFE-DWSYHF-EP
- DAYLIGHT ROBBERY-Through the Confusion-LP
- TUBERCULOSIS-Disfrasandose-EP
- RAYOS X-Mi Desorden-EP
- WHITE LUNG-Atlanta-EP
- ROGERNOMIX-EP
- CREDENTIALS-Routines-LP
- HANDITUPTOHERS-Wild City Honest Dancing-LP
- ST DAD-EP / HOMOSTUPIDS-EP

MARTIN SORRONDEGUY

- BLACK BUG-LP
- DAILY VOID-The Eclipse of 1453-12"
- SLICES-Crusing-LP
- MANIPULATION-Violence-EP
- KVORTERINGEN-Samhällets Förrädare-LP
- BAD TASTE-I Was A Teenage Jack the Ripper-EP
- KIELTOLAKI-Massahypnoosi-LP
- VARAUS-1/1-LP
- SOCIETY NURSE-Junk Existence-EP
- DESOLATION-Rest in Panic-EP

ZINE TOP TEN

- *Fury #18*
- *Distort #27*
- *Make a Mess #2*
- *Please Let Me Help*
- *Stained Sheets #3.1*
- *Anarchist Against the Wall*
- *The Match #108*
- *Loserdom #20*
- *Cuitat Podrida #9*
- *Chatic's Revenge #6/Ploppy #10*

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A WHOLE CRAPLOAD OF MRR BACK ISSUES...

#179/April '98. Boy Sets Fire, Tres Kids, Idyls, Spat & The Guttersnipes, The Posers, Explosive Kate, Douche Flag.

#180/May '98. Reinforce, Discontent, TV Killers, Slack Action, Eyeliners, Mademoiselle, MK Ultraviolence, Haulin' Ass, 97a, Infiltrators, Jack Saints, Stray Bullets.

#181/June '98. Grapefruit, Druggies, DDI, Bonecrusher, Normals, All Bets Off, Stiletto Boys, Summerjack, Cell Block 5.

#184/Sept '98. Absentees, Devoid of Faith, UXA, Umlaut, Four Letter Word, Streetwalkin' Cheetahs, Ricanstruction, Libertine, Indecision, Snarkout Boys.

#186/Nov '98. Registrators, August Spies, Marilyn's Vitamins, Chinese Love Beads.

#187/Dec '98. Real Kids, Sawn Off, Cretins, Spider Cunts, Heroines, 3rd Party, No Class.

#188/Jan '99. Stitches, Neighbors, Mansfields, Real Swinger, Marauders, Mark Britback, Mars Moles, DOA.

#189/Feb '99. Monster X, Peter & the Test Tube Babies, Steam Pig, Maurauders, Yakuza, Dead Beat, Halfways, Hot Rod Honeys, DeRita Sisters.

#190/Mar '99. John Holstrom, Powerhouse, Brezhnev, Slappy, Black Pumpkin, Smartbomb ca, Wanda Chrome, Long Gones, Smogtown, Halfways, Tilt.

#191/April '99. Murder Suicide Pact, Kil Kare, Dudman, Super Hi-Fives, Better Than Elvis DJs, Pet Peeves, Loose Ends, Slingshot Episode.

#195/Aug '99. Moral Crux, RC5, Have Nots, Ill Tempered, Dysentery, Greg Higgins, Revlons, Larry & the Gonowheres.

#196/Sept '99. Hopscotch, Catharsis, Orchid, The Pricks, Grissle, Product X, Reaching Forward, Emerge, Third Degree, "Epicenter Zone '90-'99".

#197/Oct '99. Reducers SF, Lower Class Brats, Reactor 7, TheGodsHateKansas, Futuro Incierto, Showcase Showdown, Waifle, Flat Earth Recs.

#208/Sept '00. Le Shok, the Commies, the Chemo Kids, Day of Mourning, Affront, Diaspora, Whippersnapper, Hopeless/Sub City, Prank, Countdown to Oblivion

#209/Oct '00. Loose Lips, Godstomper, Peace of Mind, FYP, I Farm, Annalise, Cattle Decapitation, Riot/Clone.

#214/Mar '01. Crispus Attucks, Fetish, Lifes Halt, Mr. Roboto, Dream Dates, Satan McNugget, Havoc, Briefs.

#218/July '01. Guyana Punchline, Les Sexareenos, The Devil Is Electric, Red Monkey, White Collar Crime, Forca Macabra, The Ataris, Suicide, The Mob

#221/Oct '01. The G8 Summit, Reflections, Soophie Nun Squad, Totalitär, True North, Wontons, Sin Dios, Bottles & Skulls, Scarred For Life, Flowers in the Dustbin, Remains of the Day, Ritchie Whites, B'67.

#223/Dec '01. "US Policy in the Middle East." "Revisiting 1948." Manifesto Jukebox, Good Riddance, Pokers, Viimenen Kolonna, Bluebloods, Vitamin X tour diary, Flakes, Pg. 99, the Mob, 7 Days of Samsara.

#225/Feb '02. Lengua Armada, Breaker Breaker, 3 Yrs. Down, Scrotum Grinder, Turun Tauti, Flux Of Pink Indians, Holding On, Pauki, 86'd, See You In Hell, Red Light Sting, Nazis From Mars, Scare Tactic.

#227/Apr '02. Bellrays, Rhinos, Wasted, Kristofer Pasanen, Business, Assert, DS 13 tour report, Life Set Struggle, Iowaska, Zounds.

#229/June '02. Countdown To Putsch, The Awakening, Dave Hill Distribution, Holier Than Thou, Kill Devil Hills, Sound Of Failure, E.T.A., Nubs, Les Baton Rouge, New Disorder Records, Career Suicide, Swellbellys, The Sinyx.

#230/July '02. Bitchin', Redencion 911, Phantom Limbs, Secretions, Holy Molar, Sharp Knife, Mighty John Waynes, A Global Threat, Groovie Ghoulies, Reproach, Annie Anxiety.

#233/Oct '02. "All Ages" article, Scholastic Deth, Runnamucks, Sinners & Saints, Panic, Gasolheads, Jewws, Futures, Michael Landon's Commandos, Storm the Tower, Against Me!, Balance of Terror, Class Assassins, Spazm 151.

#234/Nov '02. Snobs, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour, The Oath, Radio 4, Feederz, Charm City Suicides, Selfish, Riot 99, End On End, Peawees, Born/Dead.

#235/Dec '02. Anti-war Special Issue. Articles: "Reading for Democracy," "War on Iraq?" "Unfinished American Revolution." Resource Guide. "US Involvement in Iraq,""Axis of Empire." Long Island DIY Scene, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour part 2, Smalltown, Kylesa, Crash & Burn.

#236/Jan '03. Mr. California & State Police, Iron Lung, Riff Randells, Chainsaw, *Artcore*, Latterman, Travis Cut, Phenomenauts, Pretty Little Flower, X-Cretas.

#238/Mar '03. World Burns To Death, Chronics, Vilently Ill, Dystopia, Pilger, Exotic Fever, Brezhnev, R.A.M.B.O., Blown To Bits, Put To Shame, Deconditioned, This Bike Is A Pipe Bomb, Monsters.

#239/Apr '03. Romanian D-beat, Meconium Records, Amazombies, Abandoned Hearts Club, Mike V. & the Rats, Nicki Sicki, Bigamists, Bolivia article, Negatives, Kuolema, Defiance.

#240/May '03. I Quit, Apers, Headless Horsemen, Lesser of Two, Barse, Nightmare, Music Zine Roundtable, Exploding Hearts, Flesh Packs, Blacklist Brigade.

#241/June '03. Tyrades, Lumbergh, The Stand By Me, New Mexican Disaster Squad, Cut the Shit, Libertinagem, 17th Class, the Ends, He Who Corrupts, Deathbag, Cria Cuervos.

#242/July '03. Pensacola & San Francisco punk protest reports, John Wilkes Booze, Anfo, Bob Suren, Migra Violenta, Jackson 8, *Snakepit* zine, Krigshot, the Rites, Deadfall.

#243/Aug '03. "Media Alliance and the FCC," Striking Distance, Malcontents, Invisible City, Books Lie, Charm City Art Space, Hopeless Dregs of Humanity, I Shot Cyrus, Sunday Morning Einsteins, What the Kids Want, Onion Flavored Rings.

#244/Sept '03. None More Black, Deadline, Rai Ko Ris, Boxed In, Exploding Hearts, Raving Mojos, Blackout Terror, Morticia's Lovers, Thee Fine Lines, *Trust* zine.

#245/Oct '03. No Time Left, Riistetyt, Intense Youth, The Gimmies, Ass End Offend, Artimus Pyle, La Fraction, Kung Fu Rick, The Horror.

#246/Nov '03. Punk & Resistance in Israel, Letters from Palestine, No Choice, FM Knives, Bury the Living, Marked Men, The Dirty Burds, Provoked.

#247/Dec '03. DSB, The Boils, Popular Shapes, Phoenix Foundation, Bathtub Shitter, Meet the Virus, Cropknox, "Punk Babies on Tour" Article.

#249/Feb '04. From Ashes Rise, Hagar the Womb, This Is My Fist, Skip Jensen, Gride, Katy Otto/Mike Taylor Dialogue, John Yates, Pointing Finger.

#250/Mar '04. Best Records of 2003, Miami FTAA protests, Clorox Girls, FIYA, "La Villita: Chicago Pilsen Scene," Terminus Victor, Restarts, Damage Done, Knights of New Crusade.

#251/April '04. The Fuse!, Väkivaltaa, Modern Machines, Microcosm, Migra Violenta Euro tour diary, Allegiance, Neurotic Swingers, Xavier Lepaige Photos, Le Scrawl, Vrah.

#253/June '04. Sweet J.A.P., Gorilla Angreb, Vbetsek!, Minority Blues Band, Scrivy Dogs, Molotov Cocktail, Kidnappers, Schifosi, King Ly Chee, YDI.

#254/July '04. No Hope For The Kids, Dropdead, Diskords, Breakfast, Asschapel, I Excuse, Strung Up, To Hell & Back, Four Eyes, Lamant, Gammits MW, scene reports from Portland, Boston and Germany.

#255/Aug '04. "Punk's Not Dead, Reagan Is" Special Issue, Leatherface, Get It Away, The Hatepinks, Keen Monkey Work, New York City, South Dakota, Czech Republic, Philippines, Russia.

#256/Sep '04. Observers, Witchhunt, Annihilation Time, Zann, Eskapo, FxPxO, Haymarket Riot, Fourth Rotor, Les Georges Lenigrad, Texas scene, Newfoundland, Indiana, England.

#257/Oct '04 The Election Issue, Jesse Townley, Matt Gonzalez, Rattus, Fighting Dogs, Hero Dishonest, Kickz, Boss Martians, Reactionary 3, Slovakia, Australia, South Wales, South East Asia.

#258/Nov '04. Career Suicide, Cathy Wilkerson of the Weather Underground, No Fucker, The Repos, Dominatrix, Ashtray, Deadstop, Midnight Creeps, Michale Graves, The Diffs, Shemps, Abi Yo Yo's.

#259/Dec '04. Bad Business, Penelope Houston, Rambo, AI, Ass, I Attack, The Krunchies, A-Lines, Insurgence Records, The Hates, Accidents, Massgrav, The Critics, Merciless Game, SF Hotel Workers Strike, photos from Japan, SoCal & the Bay Area.

#260/Jan '05. Technocracy, The Total End, Only Crime, True North, Partisans, For The Worst, Dick Spikie, Straight to Hell, Black Cross, Action, Ergs, Rusty Nails, Queer Activism in London, Greg Shaw tribute, John Peel tribute, Andrew "Stig" Sewell tribute, Beijing punk photos.

#261/Feb '05. Year End Top Tens, Riistetyt, Lost Cherrees, Complete Control, Cheap Sex, Gasoline Please, Beerzone, Greyskull, MOTO, Water Into Beer Fanzine, Swe-Punk scumpit, Japan punk photos, Bay Area punk photos, Texas, Russia, and Malaysia scene reports.

#262/March '05. Kärnvapen Attack, Neo Boys, Catholic Boys, Dead Moon, Wreckage, Frantix, Armitage Shanks, Wendy Kroys, To What End?, Cell Block 5, Bent Outta Shape, Ah-Nah Tron, Slovakia, Indonesia, and Illinois scenes.

#263/April '05. All Crusties Spending Loud Night 2004, Bombenalarm, Battleship, APA, The Black Lips, Words That Burn, Flamingo 50, The Low Budgets, Mellakka, I Object, Antisect, Bay Area scene report, South Coast UK scene report.

#264/May '05. Crime, Love Songs, Bruce Banner, Intent, The Holy Mountain, Have Heart, The Bill Bondsmen, The Real Losers, archive photos, Bay Area scene photos, Taiwan and Rochester scene reports.

#265/June '05. Endless Nightmare, Hard Skin, Kolokol, Amebix, Transistor Transistor, The Safes, The Detonators, Finland scene report, France scene report, SoCal scene report.

#266/July '05. The Carbonas, MDC, Destrux, Unkind, Hiretsukan, Giant Haystacks, Ohuzaru, Teenage Harlets, Michigan scene report, San Diego scene report, Eugene, OR scene report, photos.

#267/August '05. Knugen Faller, Sleeper Cell, Motorama, Gulcher Records history, Army of Jesus, The Slicks, Thee Merry Widows, Rotten Sound, The Faction (UK), Czech and New Zealand scene reports.

#268/September'05. Signal Lost, Gulcher Records history part two, Teenage Bottlerocket, Mattilda (aka Matt Bernstein Sycamore), The Spectacle, Bang Sugar Bang, Chumbawamba, Reason of Insanity, Forward To Death, Flyer art, Florida Scene Report, Bay Area scene report, photos.

#269/October '05. Hammer, Desastre, Human Eye, Les Bellas, Gasmask Terror, Randy "Biscuit" Turner tribute, Stalag 17 (UK), Stepbrothers, Retching Red, Weaving the Deathbag, Gather, Chicago and SoCal scene reports.

#270/November '05. Clorox Girls European Tour, Czolgosz, Regulations, Time Flys, Taxi, No More Lies, Oi!, Paddy Costello of the Dillinger Four, Smartpils, Revenge of Mongoloid, Pisschrist, Scene reports: Puerto Rico, UK, Russia.

#271/December '05. Besthöyen, Abductee SD, Tractor Sex Fatality, George Harrison, Deathtoll, Photos by icki, Ice & The Iced, the Ulcers, Chimps Eat Bananas, Deranged / Criminal IQ / Kick'n'Punch Records. Scene reports: Iowa, Maine, Illinois.

#272/January '06. Conga Fury, Let's Grow, Frustration, Bastardass, Icons of Filth, Burial, Hrydjuverk, Cranked Up!, Urrke T & the Midlife Crisis, Tropezio, *Baboon of Sickness* zine, Scene reports: Austin, France, Michigan, Larry Wolfley photos.

#273/February '06. Fuses, Endstand, Out Cold, Pedestrians, Acts of Sedition, BadEatingHabits, Western Addiction, Jesus Fucking Christ, Toxic Waste, Punk photo spread, St. Louis, USA & Brighton, UK scene reports.

#274/March '06. Best of 2005, Formaldehyde Junkies, Brutal Knights, Kansan Uutiset, Hatred Surge, A-Heads, Manikin, Upinatem, Hips, Boston scene report, Punk photo spread.

#275/April '06. History of ABC No Rio (Part One), Ringers, Missbrukarna, '90s garage punk scumpit, Anatomi-71, After the Bombs, Rubella Ballet, RIP Pig Champion, Ricky Adam interview and photographs, Sean McGhee, Hard Skin US tour diary.

#276/May '06. "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (Part One), History of ABC No Rio (Part Two), Vitamin X Asian Pacific tour diary, Soviet Valves Suburban Death Machine, Frustrations, George Hurchalla, Scene reports: Czech Republic and Greece.

#277/June '06. "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (Part Two), Imperial Leather, Boom Boom Kid, Vitamin X Asian Pacific Tour (part two), "How to Make It Big!" by the Phantom Surfers, Magrudergrind, Poland.

#278/July '06. Billy Childish, Death Token, The First Step, Ramsey Kanaan of AK Press, Headache City, Deconditioned, Under Pressure, Insuiciety, Instigators, Malaysia Scene, Bay Area Scene Pics.

#279/August '06. Mika Miko, The Fall, Cardiac Arrest, Digger & the Pussycats, Massmord, Insect Warfare, The Astronauts, Canary Islands Photo Spread, Four Slicks, The Fallout, PAWNS, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, & Umeå, Sweden scenes.

#280/September '06. Hjerte Stop, Grupo Sub-1, Desperate Bicycles, Bill Daniel interview and photo spread, APF Brigade, Disconvenience, Southkore Fest photo spread, Rosenbombs, Up the Voltage, Euro photo spread, Svartenbrandt, Asheville, NC & world wide punk scene reports.

#281/October '06. Out With a Bang, Redd Kross, Derek Lyn Plastic, We March, Alan Milman, Rat Traps, Blood Robots, The Scarred, Gilbert Switzer, Japan & US photo spreads, Sweden & UK scene reports.

#282/November '06. The Feelers, PESD, Toxic Ephex, Auktion, Bruise Violet, *Trust* fanzine, The Homosexuals, The Effigies, Rat City Riot, New York City & North Carolina scene reports.

#283/December '06. Jay Reatard interview & photos, Crimes Against Humanity Records, A Touch of Hysteria, Doris Fanzine, Kvoteringen, '90s Punk Scumpit Part II, Black Chrome, The Dirty Water Club, photos, Tokyo scene report.

#284/January '07. Margaret Thrasher, 924 Gilman at 20 Years, Order of the White Rose, Regress, Subhumans (UK) Part One, Blank Its, Condenada, Genetic Control, photos, Syracuse & San Diego scene reports.

#285/February '07. Randy "Biscuit" Turner of the Big Boys & the early Texas punk scene, Lemuria, Ruin, Subhumans (UK) Part Two, The Blinds, Tranzistors, ANS, Riot This, La Piovra, Bay Area scene pics, Barcelona, Spain scene report.

#286/March '07. Best of 2006, Smartut Kahol Lavan, Electric Kisses, Holy Shit!, Lost Cherrees Pt 1, Go!, Kraljevo, Serbia, and Bakersfield, CA scene reports.

#287/April '07. Alicja Trout, Keith Rosson (*Avow* zine), Crap Corps, The Vicious, Scum System Kill, Lost Cherrees Pt 2, Restless Youth, SBV, Australia, Kyiv, Ukraine, and Pittsburgh, PA scene reports.

#288/May '07. Clockcleaner, Pisschrist, The Rats (Sweden), Conflict (US), The Viletones, Violent Tumor, Czech Republic and East Texas scene reports.

#289/June '07. Ultimo Resorte, Kursk, Masstrauma, Social Circkle, Final Approach, Post Punk Kitchen, Southern Death Cult, Portland Drummers, Timisoara, Copenhagen, and Pampanga scene reports.

#290/July '07. Stormcrow, Merkit, Solid Decline, Monster Squad, Sex Vid, Vivisick, Warkrime, Top Ten, *We're Gonna Fight* zine, White Cross, Berlin scene report.

#291/August '07. *MRR* 25th Anniversary Issue, Martin Sprouse, Tim Yohannon, No Slogan, Ruidosa Inmundicia, Chinese Telephones, Vaseline Children, Anti-System, Dave Roche, 6-page retrospective photo-spread, Kawakami/ Disclose obituary, Brazil scene report.

#292/September '07. New Bloods, Chronic Seizure, Outraged, Geriatric Unit, Active Distribution, Gruk, The Mods, No Defences, The Fakes, Trashies Tour Report, Mexico scene report.

#293/October '07. Punk and Immigration Theme issue w/ interviews, articles, and stories. Anti-You, Loser Life, Political Asylum, Olympia scene report.

#294/November '07. The Hipshakes, Neverending Party, Punk & Immigration article, Finally Punk, La Lucha Para La Justicia en Guatemala, Leftover Crack, AOA.

#295/December '07. Surrender, What If Gods Lie?, The Crawlers, 2:20, The Joneses, Libertario Magazine, Bad Samaritans, Shrapnel, Untermensch.

#296/January '08. Hellshock, Mario Panciera, Anathema, The System, Eddy Current Suppression Ring, The Voids, Cinecyde, Kykllooppien Sukupuutto, Punch In The Face, BSA.

#297/February '08. Marie Kanger-Born, Thrillhouse Records, Contaminators, Oi Polloi, Obstruction, I Walk the Line, Utopia

#298/March '08. Best of 2007, Autistic Youth, White Lung, Karma Sutra, Clusterfuck, Sharon Cheslow, Slaughter of the Innocent.

#299/April '08. Government Warning, Age, Off With Their Heads, Guided Cradle, Go It Alone, Fy Fan, Daily Void, Hungarian Scene history.

#300/May '08. NorCal Punk Special: Fix My Head, Black Rainbow, Tank Crimes, Young Offenders, Church Police, Traditional Fools, Six Weeks/Short Fast & Loud, Ecoli.

#301/June '08. Underground Railroad to Candyland, Straightjacket Nation, Red Dons, Spectres, Dean Dirg, Kola, Los Violadores, the Sears, Tentacles of Destruction, Antibodies, Head on Collision.

#302/July '08. Giuda, Wasted Time, Reality, Sin Orden, Teenage Head, Antidote, La Urss, Canadian Rifle, Seasick, Israel & Japan scenes.

#303/August '08. Double Negative, Burnt Cross, Masapunk, Chicago Clitfest, Intifada, Nuclear Death Terror, Raw Power, Unlovables, Waste, Chaos In Tejas photospread, Houston and Grand Rapids scene reports.

#304/September '08. Raymond Pettibon, John Stabb of Government Issue, Cola Freaks, Measure [sa], The Press, XYX, Simply Saucer, Kulturkampf, Andy T, FPO, and Columbia scene report.

#305/October '08. Pierced Arrows, Bum Kon, Deep Sleep, Diente Perro, IRA, Legion of Parasites, Reality Control, Riot City Records, Stations, Test Patterns.

#306/November '08. Brain Handle, Assassins, Diodes (pt. 1), 97 Shiki, Black Dove, No Bunny, Shellshag, Sista Sekunden, Vivian Girls, Animals And Men.

#308/January '09. Punks & Film Special with Target Video, Whatever Happened To Susan Jane, Cleveland's Screaming, Mondo Vision, After the Salad Days, You Weren't There, Botinada, Taqwacores, and more.

#309/February '09. Ooga Boogas, Mind Eraser, Cococoma, Extortion, Boyracer, Nixe, Mr. California, Deathcage, Squalora, Maniax, Null and Void, Think Fast.

#310/March '09. 2008 Year-end Top Tens, Health Issue Special–Interviews with Mikey Mind, Chris Colohan and Craig Lewis, plus tons of articles.

#311/April '09. Print Media special with Erick Lyle (Scam zine), Shit-Fi, Z-Gun, Terminal Boredom, Tales Of Blarg, John Holmstrom (Punk magazine), History of skate zines, Punk flyer art, and a dozen one-page fanzines.

#312/May '09. Criminal Damage, Never Healed, Masonics, Screaming Females, Germ Attak, Petticoats, Condominium, Passion Killers, Pioggia Nera, & the second part of the health issue.

#313/June '09. Cult Ritual, Acid Reflux, NN, Herds, Hunx and His Punx, Grass Widow, Project Hopeless, Defect Defect, Tom's Midnight Garden, Existers and scene reports from Sydney and Boston.

#314/July '09. Libyans, Coke Bust, Strange Boys, Turboslut, Vogue, Smart Cops, Zyanose, Dennis Dread, a History of Squatting in Italy, Tornonto Scene Report.

#315/August '09. Zero Boys, Skin Like Iron, Punch, The Black and Whites, Insomnio, Resist, Blank Dogs, Etacarinae, Come On, London and Brest scene reports.

#316/September '09. Amebix, Born/Dead, Divisions, Meatlocker, Something Fierce, Mutating Meltdown, Altercado, Anal Warnead, Nick Toczec, Cowley Club, Albany Scene Report.

#317/October '09. Queer issue, with Nastyfacts, Gary Floyd, Limp Wrist, Jos Seein' Red, GB Jones, Younger Lovers, Vaginal Davis, Josh Ploeg, Teu Pai Já Sabe?, Schwarzer Kanal, Bromance, Extra Tongue, and more.

#318/November '09. Destino Final, Ratas Del Vaticano, Hex Dispensers, John Joseph/Cro-Mags, Explode Into Colors, Ratos De Porao, Stupids, Antidotum/Czosnek Tour Diary, Disco Assault, Fuera De Linea

#319/December '09. The Fix, Slices, Nodzzz, Brilliant Colors, Positive Noise, Gun Outfit, Pink Reason, Scrotum Poles, Gandhi's Cookbook, Goner Fest Photospread, Punk On Kuollut, Eläköön Hardcore: A Personal History of Finnish Hardcore

#320/January '10. MRR Top Ten of the Decade, D-Clone, Broken Water, Complications, Control, Ian Glasper (*The Day the Country Died/Burning Britain*)

#321/February '10. Photo Issue. SOLD OUT!!! Sorry...

#322/March '10. MRR Review Staff's 2009 Top Tens, Japanese artist Sugi, Death, Dry-Roy, Druid Perfume, Kim Phuc, Defensa Absoluta

#323/April '10. The Spits, Face the Rail, Battletorn, Scatha, Dadfag, Attentat Sonore, Partibrejkers, Mob Rules, Last Pogo, John Paull Williams from Really Red, Chuck Warner.

#324/May '10. Bruce Roehrs memorial., Kleenex/Liliput, Necro Hippies, Isterismo, RVIVR, Iceage, Tubers, Rot Shit, Beefeater, Cairo IL.

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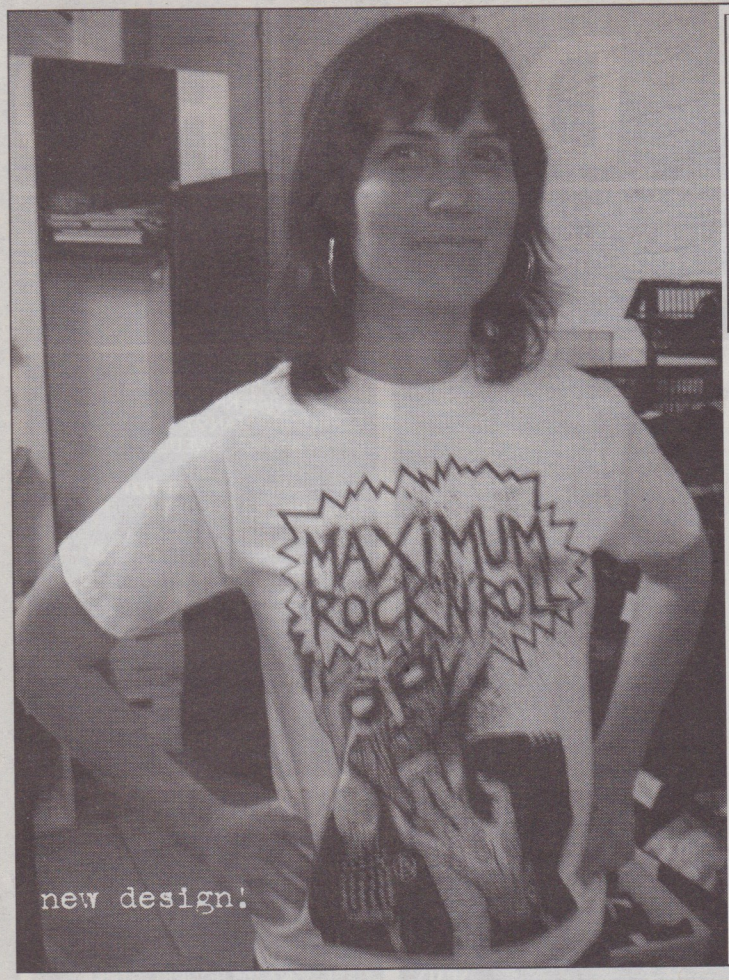

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LETTERS

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Dear MRR–
In your last issue, there was an interview with John Paul, former bass player of Really Red. He repeatedly described me as a Marxist. Not to start a mudslinging fest, but I suggest that John Paul wouldn't know a Marxist from a pharmacist.

As a result of his Limbaugh/FOX News soaked brain, to John Paul anyone who doesn't aspire to unlimited personal greed and who might have ideas of equality justice and democracy to the left of Hermann Goering is a Marxist.
—U-Ron (Really Red)

Not only was U-Ron kind enough to write us this letter, but we will be running his side of the Really Red story in response to John Paul's interview that will appear in the next MRR *(#326). Thank you!!*
—Mariam

Dear MRR–
I ended up in the Intensive Care Unit of our local hospital back in November in diabetic shock with blood sugars measuring in the 600-700s. Sad part is that we had no idea that I was a diabetic. Pretty scary shit. If I would have waited another 12-24 hours, I would have most likely been dead. I don't remember half of my hospital stay because I, basically, was in a comatose state, had to be spoon-fed and have my wife help me piss in a jug. But that is not the important part of why I am writing.

I write this because my wife has never been a fan a punk music and she calls all the zines and pamphlets that I read "propaganda." I have to add that while feeling this way, she does not expect me to change and be someone who I am not.

The first day I got out of the ICU and was put in "general holding"(for lack of a better word), when she came back to see me after work she brought the one thing that she thought would brighten my day being that I was unable to leave. She hands me the November issue of *MRR* and says, "I thought you would like to have this." It totally made my day. She thinks everything I read is dumb, but she went out of her way to make sure that I had a copy. It really did make the rest of my stay at the hospital a lot easier. They also would not let me smoke, so *MRR* became the outlet for that as well. I guess I just wanted to share this with you all and let you know that you helped me through my hospital stay and technically helped me quit smoking. It is also pretty awesome that my wife knew that having a copy of *MRR* would make my days a little better.

In closing, thank you *MRR* for being awesome! Thanks for all the years of reading, and all the years of reading to come. Thanks to my wife for also being awesome and for dealing with my shit.
Stay Punk!
—Chuxema

Thank you so much for the awesome letter! A special thanks to your wife for being an awesome person and allowing the "propaganda" to keep flowing through your home! I can't imagine what you and she have been going through with how sudden this all was. From myself and the rest of the MRR *crew, we hope your recovery is speedy and that you are back stronger than ever. We also hope that whatever transition your life will make because of all of this, that it will be as smooth as possible. Thanks again for the letter, it makes us feel like we are doing something right and worthwhile (especially the quitting smoking part!). Stay punk!*
Your Friends,
—Mariam and the MRR Crew

Dear MRR–
I would like to take issue with Yosef's review of the Expendable Youth EP in issue 323. For those who missed it, Yosef slams the EP for it's "earnest left politics" and he expresses a "cynical sneer at the hope for meaningful change."

Personally, I didn't care for the music on this 7" myself. But I think Yosef's criticism of the bands social commentary, and his generalizations about the scene which they are a part of are extraneous to the review.

Some portion of each generation of young people chooses to rebel against the establishment. Despite attempts to steer this rebellion towards commercialism, some segment of the young population is significantly outraged enough at the injustice around them to be drawn to radical politics. Thanks to the combination of rebellion and social commentary in early punk, a large number of people have been exposed to radical politics and activism via the punk scene. This was certainly the case for me, after getting into bands like Crass, Conflict and MDC in the '80s. I occasionally roll my eyes at the overbearing dogmatism or naïve idealism of young punk bands. However, I feel that the scene, and perhaps society at large, are better off for having a segment of the culture that is willing to speak out, protest and express their anger at the system through music and art. If radical politics are not acceptable subject matter for hardcore punk music, what would Yosef prefer?

Furthermore, his characterization of Expendable Youth as "Crimethinc or college educated revolutionaries" is a bit of an over generalization and stereotype. Expendable Youth are on Chicago based Shaman Records, and if you were familiar with the scene in Chicago you might re consider your criticism. I will admit that I am biased, as Chicago is the closest big city to Minneapolis and probably my second favorite US city (after Minneapolis) and I make the seven hour drive to Chicago for shows a few times a year. Chicago's South Side is home to two labels South Kore and Shaman and dozens of bands centered on the scene in Little Village and Pilsen. This area is dominated by first and second generation working class immigrants. That a lot of these kids would be attracted to punk, and to punk with a radical social critique is not surprising. In fact, given the absence of similar scenes in places like Texas, South Florida or Georgia, I would have to say it's quite laudable. Pilsen has a tradition of class struggle against the Chicago establishment that is over 100 years old. You don't hear a lot of voices from young, working class first and second generation immigrants in the media or politics. But you *can* hear this group of people voice their political views and social criticism when you go see bands like Tras De Nada, Sin Orden or No Slogan. These bands and the scene that surrounds them in Chicago are some of the most legitimate and sincere voices in punk today and not to be dismissed so lightly.

Regarding his lack of understanding as to how "the 2016 Olympics need to be resisted" I will fill you in. Chicago had an unsuccessful bid to host the 2016 Olympics. The story of sports in America these days is one of super rich sports team owners and big business using political influence and the popularity of sports with the public to transfer massive amounts of wealth from the public to themselves. Do you think the Olympics would be any different? Given the political climate in Chicago, the Olympics would probably be used as a justification to raise sales and property taxes to build stadiums that would only benefit already super rich sports team owners and suburban sports fans Furthermore, "cleaning up the city" would be an excellent pretext for land grabs by developers and speculators forcing more working class people off their land or taxing them out of their homes. If you lived in Chicago you would probably see many other unmet needs that would be a better investment such as infrastructure, schools, housing and health care as opposed to sports. Indeed, if you stand in Little Village, about the only well funded public institution you can see is the Cook County Jail.

It is just the kind of dismissive attitude that Yosef exemplifies that allows the elite to ram this kind of bullshit down our throats time and time again. Which is perhaps, good reason for bands to address these topics in punk songs, as they are one of the only outlets of expression left for those without a stake in the power process.
—Felix Havoc

Great Letter. Being from Chicago, I have to say "Fuck Yeah."Because of space limits, I will just have to address this in my column and believe me, I have much to say...
—Mariam

Felix,
Thanks for the letter. It's good to know that there are still people who not only read this rag, but also care enough about its contents to take the time to respond. Granted, you also write for MRR, *but from what I've been told there were a few other people who wrote indignant responses to my review, so my point still*

stands.

I don't believe that "radical politics are not acceptable subject matter for hardcore punk music." The first hardcore/punk records I bought were Feeding of the 5000 *and* Fresh Fruit for Rotting Vegetables, *two milestones of punk rock politics. The third was* Damaged, *since I thought that Black Flag must be anarchists, given their band name. An incorrect assumption, but all three of these still remain among my favorite records. The reason I got into punk in the first place was that I already considered myself an anarchist. I had discovered the writings of Emma Goldman, Peter Kropotkin, Errico Malatesta, Alexander Berkman and Mikhail Bakunin at my local library while I was still in middle school. I had gone vegetarian at age twelve and I was a die-hard anarchist by thirteen. It wasn't until I was sixteen that I discovered punk, and what first attracted me was the naïve impression that punk rock was anarchist music. The fact that there were other living, breathing anarchists out there, not just obscure figures in dusty old books, was an immense revelation that made me feel like I was no longer alone in the world.*

Like I said, I considered myself an anarchist by the time I was thirteen. I had already protested the first US/Iraq War at the tender age of ten and I was regularly attending tame animal rights demos before I entered eighth grade. However, over the years my views have evolved and changed. I'm still vegan, and I still consider myself some sort of an anarchist, but I have grown completely disillusioned with activism and modern "anarchist" culture over the last decade or so. This disillusionment has come about through a combination of personal experience, real world observation and a healthy dose of anarchist and (small "c") communist theory. I'm not going to go into my political ideas in too much depth here, but I personally find the kind of activism generally advocated within punk circles, and specifically that advocated by Expendable Youth, to be counterproductive at best and counterrevolutionary at worst. While that is certainly only my opinion, my reviews reflect my opinions. I probably shouldn't have wasted so much space griping about the band's political views, but those views deeply informed nearly every aspect of the record I was reviewing.

I believe that there is room within hardcore/punk for virtually all views and ideas: the loveably naïve politics of bands like Expendable Youth, the sneering nihilism of Haymaker and Gordon Solie Motherfuckers, the in-your-face feminism of Bikini Kill and the macho posturing of Agnostic Front. I believe that punks are generally smart enough to make up their own minds, to decide for themselves what they want to believe. I also think that hardcore/punk is strong enough to withstand jaded, smirking pseudo-criticism from the likes of me. If Expendable Youth want to believe that their calls to activism can in some possible way affect the goings-on of the Olympics, that's their prerogative. If I happen to think that's a ridiculous notion and I feel the urge to point it out, that's my prerogative. It's a fine old punk tradition that I'm part of, that of the hecklers and the court jesters, the assholes who make people uncomfortable and make unfashionable observations. Jello Biafra was one, once upon a time. Mykel Board is now, in his own fashion. While I don't see myself on their level, I'm glad that what I wrote was at least able to get a rise out of someone.

I do feel that I should apologize for any bad faith assumptions I made about the band, specifically the "CrimethInc/college" comment. That was out of line and amateurish at best. I'm still perfectly content with the rest of my review, but I should know better than to leap to conclusions about the histories and backgrounds of people I don't know. Sorry, Expendable Youth. From what I hear you're sincere kids from a great scene. I still didn't like your record, though.
—xYosefx

Dear MRR–
"To criticize the same beliefs you had five or ten years ago makes you a hypocrite." (Letters *MRR #324)*
…Or capable of accommodating new information and altering an opinion. You make the call.
—Gene Quagmire, Parts Unknown
Ypsilanti, MI

Hello MRR!
I'm glad someone addressed what was said by that smug guy in the Dry Rot interview. Good job Miss Bastani, you did a much more eloquent job than I could have. But one thing tho! I wonder who told that guy that Crack Plaque is over with? Christian Talk Radio? I'm currently incarcerated in San Quentin State Prison serving a two year sentence for assault. I spent six months prior to this fighting my case in SF county jail. It seems like almost *every* single black male I've come across in here [that] I've talked to, over 100 easily, is here for possession of crack cocaine or they were arrested in a "buy bust" trying to sell crack to an undercover pig.

I've spent most of the last twelve years roaming around the country. Sometimes hopping freight trains, hitchhiking, living in vans or squats or crazy punk houses. Sometimes on the street from Philly to NY to New Orleans to LA on up to Portland and Seattle. I've smoked more than my fair share of the aforementioned drug (among a lot of other crap) and I've lived in a lot of "black neighborhoods" or neighborhoods that would considered ghettos and crack is definitely not a huge thing of the past. It is still a *huge* thing in this country. And black males are still targets for selling it.

A couple of issues back, Layla mentioned how some columnists can't be fired due to Tim Yo's wishes. Is George Tabb one of those people? I think that his has been writing about the same type of out of touch bullshit since '98, at least when I started reading the rag. Prolly much longer. But the absolutely moronic column he wrote in #323 really takes the cake. Now, if I was not in prison and *starving* for anything to read I'd just skip his silly ass column. (Nintendo Wii and Playstation game reviews? For real?) But this last one caught my eye. I won't quote big chunks of his ridiculous column Bruce Roehrs style, but here is a prime quote: "Usually women who are dykes can rock. They may not have a penis, but they sure wish they had one. And that makes them grip that guitar all the more harder and makes them play with agility and speed and an actual sort of envy."
Take my life? *Take my column*!!! Is more like it. He equates the ability to play a guitar well with how many penises a woman has handled? He should leave *MRR* and start his own crappy zine with Karl Baklawa (whatever his name is.) They would make a good team!

What is "crashercrust" exactly? I know a subgenre but what makes it different from regular crust?

If there is anyone at all out there who wants to write me, please do. This prison is full of racist cave men, I can't stand it. I would love it if someone wrote to me!
Thanks for your time.
—David Gieseke #AC4996
S.Q.S.P.
San Quentin, CA 94974
PS That Spits interview was *way* too short!
www.cdcr.ca.gov/Visitors/Facilities/SQ.html
Thanks for your letter David and we appreciate your insight! To answer your question, bands that are influenced by Confuse from Japan, like Lotus Fucker and Morpheme, fall under "crasher crust." Basically, it's a really blown out, trebley, crusty, d-beat sound, with some screamy, yet low toned vocals.
—Mariam

Dear MRR–
Please forward this to the reviewer of Norton – *Long Walks On Short Piers*, in your recent issue (*MRR* #323). Marcel here, I play drums in Norton, in Zürich Switzerland. I was shocked to be called a chauvinist and/or bonehead in your review of our album. Your accusations (that's what these statements are, you use big ammo) refer to the artwork of the album.

The cover artwork is a panopticum, and is supposed to reflect our own incapabability (note: we are '80s squatter punkers, if you have to label us) to make any sort of positive sense of our social environment in the midst of images and messages that stream towards us day in day out.

Most of these images/messages/communications that flood us are manipulative, manipulated, distorted, hard to interpret. All the pictures on the cover are in our eyes schizophrenic, hard to interpret if one takes the background or the origin in consideration (soldier with kid, happy forced-marriage photo of girl and much older uncle, plastic surgery perfect failures, Aldo Moro. You know who that is, guess not huh, duh), looking sympathetic in the hands of what in newspeak some call terrorists, who are in fact disgruntled liberators, Brigade Rosso, Italy, and further environmental damage and freak illnesses, fake nostalgia and exploitative eroticism (people reduced to sexually loaded beasts, which we tried to distort even further by cutting and making it look like worm wallpaper). In short, we try to show what we see and make a distorted alienating total piece to look at and hopefully put the observer in various ways on the wrong foot.

Funny that you only reacted to the picture of French kissing. I realize that this probably partly reflects the American hang-up with anything sexual, even when in this case safe-wrapped by you as political correctness. I think that showing sexual exploitation and alienating imagery (highly distorted in this case by us on purpose) is not in itself sexist. You take these images out of the context of the 80 other pics and a total concept.

I used to play in BGK, we had some of the same discussions about our first LP, women in bikini in front of a atom bomb cloud. Penis landscape was also discussed in that fashion. In our band, on this particular record project, there are five people involved, three of which are women, including the cover artist. If you had bothered to read the lyrics sheet to the end you would have noticed. Of course quite a few women have sexist views, in our case I dare say that that is not the case.

Ok, music is mediocre. Fine, I can live with that. Matter of taste. We and Rinderherz records have nada in common with Fat Wreck, a little surfing would have helped there.

I do want a response. Maybe you can prove that you're not as thoughtless and self-righteous as you are superficial. As said, you use big ammo, so now respect a minimum of human and journalistic standards.
Greetings
—Marcel

Dear Marcel,
The American hang-up with anything sexual? No,

that's hardly the case. As a reviewer at MRR, *one thing you notice very quickly is that ALOT of bands use highly sexualized and objectifying pictures of women on their album art. Not because they are more comfortable with sex than us uptight Americans, but because they are douchebags that think it will make their band appear cooler. And when I see artwork that appears questionable, I will make note of it in the review.*

As for the artwork on your album, I'm glad you cleared it up. But please understand that your message was not straightforward, and your intent was not obvious. Nor was there anything in the album name that clarified what the album art was all about. Perhaps if the album's name was "Social Environmental Mayhem," I would have not been such quick to my guns. I'm not saying you have to be overly blunt about your message, I'm just saying that when your message is ambiguous, you run the risk of people not understanding and making their own assumptions.

Generally when I see three girls involved in a three-way-kiss on an album cover, it is not trying to send a sociopolitical message. It's usually just because the people in the band are chauvinists and/or boneheads. I'm glad to hear you are the exception to this.
—Fred MRR reviewer

I understand your opinion that our reviewer may have made an ill informed/reactionary assessment of your artwork and I appreciate your concepts regarding the imagry and how it is used, but to lump all Americans together, regardless of cultural backround, experience, and socioeconomic place, is ignorant and, if you will, so very "first world" of you. I offer you no PC safe wrapping here. I just hope that the self rightousness that you see in this reviewer is not mirrored every time you are offended.
—Mariam

[redacted]

Dear MRR–
"Why Chicks Can't Rock"
Wow, so all Jews are *NOT* smart.
After vomiting up retarded bile from your frightened little mind, now you have the gall to ask the world for help?
Sir, white troll lost in a wilderness of knowledge, knuckle-dragging imbecile, open your mind to reality before it's too late.
—saranackayak

It's no surprise that George Tabb writes some fucked up shit, but using a persons illness or a persons culture or mental development is no way to call someone out. While I understand your frustration, saying "so all Jews are not smart" and calling people "retarded" is not the best way to argue your case; it makes you sound like just as big of an asshole. The column was meant to be an April fools joke, I know that's not an acceptable excuse, but thanks for writing us when you read something in here that pissed you off. Women/girls/Woman identified persons, obviously, can rock and in many cases, harder than the dudes. The claims he made were so ridiculous that I really didn't think that punks could take that shit seriously. But if you did, I am glad we heard about it and I hope that it didn't discourage anyone from rocking. We got a lot of letters about this one and I want to say thank you for allowing us to print this. Others refused to have their letters printed even anonymously. So to those of you that want to send us letters to air grievances about MRR, *its content and our decisions, we are ready to have some honest discussions. Those who just want to send complaints for the purpose of being heard by me: start a zine, write a song, publish letters or don't waste my fucking time unless you want to make a change. This is a rag by punks for punks and if you don't want to join in the conversation, that's your choice, but know that there is a place here for intelligent conversation and I guarantee you that we'd all benefit by letting your voice be heard.*
—Mariam

[redacted]

Dear MRR–
This letter is in response to the *Live at the Smell* review by Carolyn Keddy, but first I'd like to say I'm sorry to hear about the passing of Bruce Roehrs. I loved his column, it was wide ranging and diverse!!!! I only met him once while staying one night at the *MRR* house three years ago, a really cool dude! Well, as one of those who went to shows at the Smell long before bands like No Age, Abe Vigoda, Mika Miko even formed. I felt I had to go back in time. It was a different time before Downtown LA became so gentrified. The Smell really did smell with all the crackheads and homeless that roamed the area, the piss in the alleyway from the bar patrons and punks. It was a dodgy area, but not really dangerous. Many people don't realize (or remember) it was a punk, metal, hxc venue. But, man, there were so many bands that played there: Run For Your Fucking Life, Reagan SS, Street Trash, NOYFB, Life's Halt, In Control, Bruce Banner, Bleeding Kansas, Please Inform the Captain This a Hijak, Resist and Exist, Total Fury, the Futures, Terrorism, Nukem, Amdi Petersen's Arme, Nausea L.A., Annihilation Time, Vitamin X, Career Suicide, the Rites, Cold Shoulder, DS 13, Limp Wrist, Kontaattaque, and a ton more. I spent many weekends there and filmed a ton of bands along with Jesse Ramos and a few others. Maybe we should have edited our footage into a DVD to give people a different perspective, hell maybe we still might! You game Jesse??? All I know is that although the Smell is very successful and I'm very happy that bands have a place to play in L.A. and the Smell has survived where other DIY venues have closed (LA punks, we have to take care of our venues!!!), but many people fail to realize is that the hxc, crust, peace punk, grind/noisecore paved the way for the bands that play there now. Never forget.
Thanks,
—Sam

[redacted]

Dear MRR –
It has come to my attention that there is a concern about the prison I'm in. Yes, this "treatment center" and the program that is offered here is the sex offender program. This facility does house the states most dangerous sex offenders over in the "civilly committed" building of the center, separate from the state inmates, and only those who have been civilly committed are the ones who have been proven beyond a shadow of a doubt, to be sexually dangerous" by state examiners. Only about three percent of the inmates are ever sexually dangerous, and committed.

A large percentage of the inmates come to this prison voluntarily to seek treatment so they can be educated and learn from the crime committed. (I don't believe that people "make mistakes" when it comes to prison. We all committed crimes…no mistakes about it). And the inmates here in T.C. will admit to his crime, at least, where in most prisons, some deny their crimes.

Every prison in Massachusetts houses sex-offenders, with the exception of the minimums. Even the women's prison in Framington has a sex offender unit. Besides this facility, there are two other prisons that have the sex offender treatment program. Norfolk houses and offers the program, and gardener is something like 80-85% and has the program.

The only difference about this facility is that they offer one extra "phase" of the program that Norfolk or Gardner has. However, when an inmate is ready to start "phase four," he is then transferred to this facility to finish his program. I am in "phase three" of the program and I am making an effort to learn something while I am here. I realize that I fucked up… no mistakes about it. My plan is to return home, be with my family and friends, and to lead a productive life once again and stay out of bad situations and be 110% sure to use better judgment in the future. It is a lot like the AA Twelve step program, which is also available here.

I do agree with Mariam with her response that everyone should be careful who they write to, whether or not they are in prison. Not everyone's motives are bad and, as far as the people who have written me from the pages of *MRR*, and the others from another periodical, the first thing that a person wants to know from a prisoner is "What did you do?" I get asked that often and I tell a person what I have done and tell them what I am doing about it and whatever it is they want to know. So far only two [people] have decided to cease correspondence, which is fine. The rest of them still write and chose to be close to befriend me because of my honesty.

But, as it's said, still be careful with who you write to, but keep and open mind and give people a chance to tell you what is "going on in their lives", and avoid passing judgment. People do judge immediately, especially in this state, which has a large number of registered sexual offenders. I believe close to 11,000.
I have not been labeled a "Most deviant person" by the state, and I do plan to lead a good life after all of this. Everyone's case is different. Good looking out and thanks *MRR* for keeping an open mind.
Cheers,
—Eric
Massechusets Treatment Center:
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[redacted]

Dear MRR–
This is a letter to warn people about Damaging Noise Records. I ordered 2xD-Clone EPs and 2xD-clone / Morpheme EPs at the end of August 2009, It is now April 2010 and I still have not received my records. I have chased Fabien for my records on numerous occasions only to be given rather feeble excuses and veiled promises of the records I ordered plus extra items "to make up for the delay." Months have passed and still nothing. I can appreciate a label being busy (I ran one myself), but I think it is unacceptable to still be keeping a very public profile and to release more records on your label when you are pocketing other peoples money and seemingly not giving a shit about ripping them off.

On a lighter note and seeing that I've been reading *MRR* for over fifteen years now, I'd like to say I think *MRR* is as good as it has ever been. The internet is great, but nothing beats the inky fingers and the superb all round coverage you lot are putting out there on a monthly basis. I really do think *MRR* is the best zine out there. I get to read about old and new bands I love and find out about loads of stuff which I would otherwise miss out on. A lot of the old punkers (I'm 35) in town are just into going and seeing Discharge and slag off anything new, like me suggesting going to see The Sceptres this week or The Bomb next week, who both fucking rule. I frequently switch off whilst listening to these people and tune into "Part Time Punks" by TV Personalities in my head as they blather on about the good old day.
Keep up the good work.
—Graham
Bristol / UK

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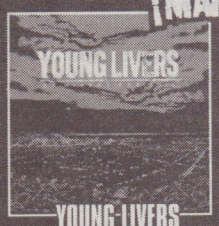

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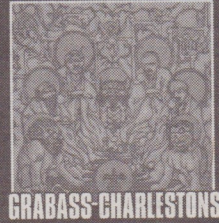

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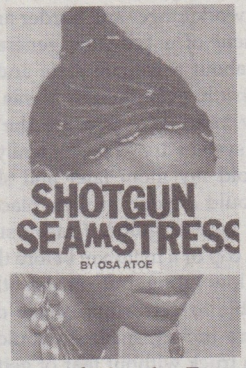


Yesterday was the last day *Taqwacore: The Birth of Punk Islam* was playing at this small art venue called Zeitgeist here in New Orleans, so me and my friend/bandmate Candice went to go catch it while we could. I'd never heard of the book *The Taqwacores* until last night, so I had no idea what to expect exactly. The book, according to what I gathered from discussion throughout the documentary, was the author's way of fusing together two worlds he took part in that never overlapped, except for in his own life.

Essentially, *The Taqwacores* is an Islamic punk rock fantasy, set in Buffalo, New York complete with "burqa-wearing riot girls, mohawked Sufis, straightedge Sunnis, Shi'a skinheads, Indonesian skaters, Sudanese rude boys, gay Muslims, drunk Muslims, and feminists." The author, Michael Muhammad Knight, is a white US-born convert who found Islam as an adult.

Knight says he assumed that writing the book would end his relationship with Islam, but instead it re-inspired it. How did a white punk dude end up converting to Islam in the first place? Knight makes it known in the movie is that his dad was a "rapist and a white supremacist." (Knight's own words.) His conversion to Islam is said in the movie to be a reaction to being raised by a bigot.

The movie follows Boston based Pakistani-American punk band the Kominas on tour in a painted green school bus with "TAQWA" stenciled across the front. (Taqwa, by the way, is a concept in Islam that refers to the idea of a higher consciousness.) Knight and solo performer Omar Waqar accompany the Kominas on their journey, bringing taqwacore to the rest of the nation, and eventually to Pakistan.

Punk rock has always used adversity as its ammunition and the taqwacore bands represented in the movie each had that raw, fuck-you thing going on, but that's where the similarities end. As a term, taqwacore—like afro-punk or queercore—speaks more about an identity than a particular sound. Aside from the Kominas, the other band you see the most footage of is Secret Trial Five, an all-girl band with queer members that formed in Vancouver and has since relocated to Toronto. They sound nothing like the Kominas and have actually withdrawn their affiliation with taqwacore since the movie was made. According to the band's website, they find the term limiting and they reject the assumption that their band came to exist due to the fictional writings of a white American convert.

At no point in the movie does Knight try to lay down some kind of Islamic punk ideology. In that way, we see punk's influence; taqwacore is anti-ideology. There are no rules. Even as they worship Allah and cover their tour van with pro-Islam graffiti, they simultaneously stand for blasphemy and irreverence. Throughout the movie, jaws dropped when bands sang lyrics like, "I am an Islamist/I am the antichrist!" Knight talks about the fact that he portrays Muslim punk characters in his book drinking and doing drugs but then admits that he himself has never had a beer in his life. Alternately, they show the band on tour smoking a shit ton of hash when they're in Pakistan. Their stance seems to be, "We do what we want and we call ourselves what we want," and they dare you to disagree.

It is this type of ambiguous location that gives taqwacore its power. Like Knight says in the movie, taqwacore exists to piss *everyone* off. They exist to piss of mainstream America, which is largely mis-educated about Islam. They aim to piss off Islamic conservatives who are patriarchal and who call music and dance *haram* (a forbidden act). They aim to piss off the typical punk rock atheist who thinks that organized religion just cannot go hand in hand with punk rock.

The most powerful parts of the movie are when the Kominas and Secret Trial Five play to mainstream Muslim audiences both here in the US and also in Pakistan (just the Kominas). Punk rock is supposed to shake things up in the world, but that is happening less and less as punk rock becomes more insular. We play to each other; we preach to the choir. The Kominas and Secret Trial Five somehow got booked to play this huge Muslim gathering (according to the website, the largest one in the country) and I was literally holding my breath, waiting to see how the audience would react.

Of course, people were outraged, especially when Secret Trial Five took stage because both bands had been told that no female singers would be tolerated at the event. But at the same time, you see teenage girls wearing their veils, looking the way teenage girls did in the 1950s and '60s at rock n roll concerts, freaking the fuck out and taking pictures with their cell phones. As the bands played on, you start to see some smiles and then you see some people start to dance and clap along. Music is amazing. I feel certain that the Kominas and Secret Trial Five changed at least a couple of those people's lives that night.

When the Kominas travel to Pakistan, they put on a totally DIY show on a rooftop in the city. They show the band passing out flyers ahead of time in the streets and getting into debates with strangers about whether non-traditional musical celebration has a place in Islam. There was no pre-established punk scene to rely on so trying to do something like that took an extra leap of faith. The evening of the show, you can see them begin to wonder if anyone at all will show up, but when it turns into a huge block party, you can't help but share in that feeling of triumph the band displays while they play. Punk rock makes dreams come true. You can tell that they'd all somehow accomplished something that they never dreamed was possible, and it was really inspiring to watch.

I'm not excited about this movie because I love to see organized religion and punk rock meet, or even because taqwacore is another space that people of color are carving out for themselves within punk rock. In fact, it was hard for me to not feel a little bit judgmental watching people who call themselves punk pray in mosques and participate in religious rituals. Furthermore, I instantly felt instantly cynical when I learned that Knight was a white guy. The Muslim struggle in the US today isn't just about religion, it's a struggle against racism and xenophobia. The *Taqwacore* website states plainly, "The Islamic punk music scene would never have existed if it weren't for [Knight's] 2003 novel, *The Taqwacores*." But even though Knight speaks throughout the whole movie with the utmost humility, which is kind of endearing, in the end it's annoying that a white guy gets the credit for starting taqwacore because it just can't be true. As I mentioned before, Secret Trial Five deny that they spawned from the book, and claim independent origins.

I think the beauty of movies like *Taqwacore* as well as others like, *Trembling Before G-d*, a documentary about gay and lesbian orthodox and Hasidic Jews, is that it shows people being something that everyone says cannot be or does not exist. When we say that certain individuals or groups "aren't punk" because they make choices that don't fit into our definition of what punk is, we are denying their right to define themselves as they wish. We also force people who are look-

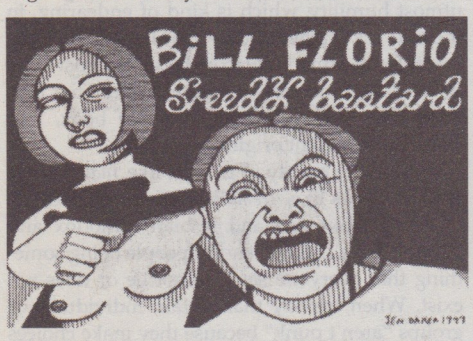
ing for a home in punk to leave part of their identity—part of who they are—at the door so that they can be accepted, i.e. "You can hang out, as long as you don't talk about _____." This is just one way that punk continues to be a subculture that alienates individuals who would probably make our communities stronger if they felt more welcome.

As people who are interested in creating an anti-oppressive society, we can't buy into that way of thinking or behaving. As a black person, a queer person, and the child of parents from a former British colony in Africa, I can't help but tie the importance of self-definition and self-determination to larger post-colonial struggles, or to the wars in Iraq or Afghanistan or even to the LGBTQI struggle here in the US and around the world.

When we deny someone's identity or choices, we deny reality, and if there's anything I want my politics to be it's realistic. In reality, the most surprising combinations of identities and beliefs can be housed in one body. I know black gay Republicans, anarcho-feminist Muslims, black punk Jehovah's witnesses and more. In order to move forward and create a non-oppressive society, we have to recognize and accept all of the subversion and cultural permutation that are inevitable parts of life, and that ultimately we all benefit from. At some point, we all have to admit that the words that we use to define ourselves, whether it's punk, feminist, Muslim, Christian, queer, or woman, are all words that mean a wide variety of things to the people who use those words on themselves, and that there's nothing we can do to control how those words get used or by whom.

Believe me, you don't wanna hear yourself say, "I don't understand how people get so sucked into religion," in the same way you might hear someone else say, "I don't understand why someone born as a male would want to be female." It's worth it to be able to come to that place where you can imagine how something that makes no sense to you in your life can make perfect sense to someone else without writing them off as stupid or insane.

I want to thank the Anarchist People of Color (APOC) movement that began at the first APOC conference in Detroit in 2003 for helping me to see where anarchism and identity politics meet, and also Candice for proofreading this and helping me hash out my ideas.



People love conspiracies, they also love to read about scandal and murder and, more importantly, they love to find some personal disconnection from any of it. I'll admit it, I love reading about this sort of thing, I'm not above being made to feel comfortable about control others have over discomfort. It's fun and it fills time I could otherwise do something with that will get me somewhere, like writing stupid columns.

So, Lee Harvey Oswald shot JFK in some sort of super-right-wing or super-left-wing conspiracy. John Hinckley shot Reagan because Jodi Foster wouldn't pay attention to him. I mean maybe Hinckley watched *Taxi Driver* a lot (hey, the ending is so happy) but who's to say Oswald didn't watch *The Manchurian Candidate* just as many times? Maybe the only reason conspiracies didn't really arise around the Reagan shooting is because Ronnie didn't croak and the shooter's visiting mom every weekend. I think more reason is that no one felt the world coming apart by the Reagan shooting as they did with Kennedy and Vietnam or with Bush and 9/11. But then again, you could say Hinckley was spared because he's the child of the wealthy and politically powerful, so even if someone put him up to the shooting, the Foster story was put there to deceive us and not encourage the counterculture mentioned in Suicidal Tendencies songs.

People come up with this crap because it enables them to feel control over a situation. No one wants to think that airplanes can just crash into our cities because of a couple of crackpots with a plan. It's much more comfortable to think that those protecting us are just putting on a show to control the masses. The funny thing is what's implied is that we should take down the leaders and shift power to the people or some church or change everything when in reality we came up with this whole idea because we do not want change. The people who really want change probably are more apt to conspire than theorize.

On the one hand you can make light of born-agains who insist God is the only one with the plan, and his plan is to squash all of us at once, any day now. Belief that some supreme power can make instant changes to the world order is much more realistic than thinking there are human forces that have anything near that ability. Secret societies are basically secret, because that's the draw for the secret society types to be drawn into membership. The truth is, the only conspiracy most of them have going on is that so many people on the outside conspire to suppose about why they're so secret. In truth it's a bunch of guys sitting around, pinching the waitress' ass and feeling happy that no one's found out how boring they really are.

The truth is, even if a few in power have the ability to bring misery on lowly crackpots, nothing is going to change if you add to this lack of control by adding a nice dura-flame log on the fire. It's one thing for certain entities to be more powerful than they're worth, it's another for folks like you and me to boost them up claiming they control everything with the press of a button. If you buy into this sort of thinking, you're really in exactly the same place as the Jehovah's Witness waking me up at 8 a.m.

There are enough injustices in the world to get upset about and the truth is, if you look globally at your predicament you're really doing OK. Friends of my parents like to have a few drinks and drone on with right-wing propaganda about how liberals are ruining everything, raising their taxes, risking their quality of life. So I asked them, "Well, Hank? You were a government worker for twenty-five years and retired to a full pension, Joe you retired after fifteen because you were injured on the job. Now there are millions just like you, who are reaping benefits that all of us could not afford, and because of it, your kids will have to work longer and harder and pay for the entitlement of a previous generation. You like to talk about a welfare state and this and that, but in truth, even though it was promised to you forty years ago, you are the one now leeching the system dry." I didn't really tell them this, but I told my mom later and she agreed with me. Would anyone in their place want to take on that kind of guilt? I mean sure it was hard being a cop or a mailman before the days of hi-tech and low crime, but on the other hand, cops were able to get drunk, shake down bad guys for extra money, mailmen could sleep in the back of a truck without fear of getting fired, those days are also gone.

So before you buy into someone's ideas of who's to blame for bad news or bad times or bad predicaments, you should look within first. Some people love being victims because being oppressed takes responsibility off oneself. It's so much easier to be a slave than someone that has to figure out how to keep ones slaves fed. It's so much easier to take pity on one self and blame others for ones own inaction. On the other hand, if you choose to overreact and scream and holler about how the man keeps you down, I'll sit back and be very entertained.

ALL FOREIGN JUNK

The last three weekends have been spent on tour with THE UV RACE, so I haven't had much time to chase new music or fanzines.

We played an amazing show in Tasmania to launch the EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING LP down there, to a room packed with a perfect combination of ambivalent radioheads and perplexed ECSR fans, and it was a blast. Tripped while playing an outdoor festival out on a property in Victoria with a wide range of bands (the best were the VU / NZ pop-inspired glory of THE TWERPS and the acid-fucked Kraut boogie rock of the OOGA BOOGAS, and, surprisingly, JUSTIN TOWNES EARLE) and walked around kicking rocks on hills and being astounded to get out of the city and see stars exist. Then last weekend was Adelaide, the best bands being the FALL / FLIPPER post-punk dirge from DUD PILLS, the loose caveman pop

of BITCH PREFECT and the hyperactive FORMALDEHYDE JUNKIES-sounding hardcore from BLOODCLOT FAGGOTS. Heaps of time spent in cars mouthing the words to the WIRE song on the stereo that everyone is singing while watching trees and rocks fly past and trying to zone out and forget about home for a while, which are some of my favorite moments of touring.

We're touring the US later this year, and STRAIGHTJACKET NATION are touring Europe (fuck yes!). If you can recommend any new shit, and if you know anyone who does any good fanzines from outside the US, Sweden or Japan, please send me an issue or get in touch.

UK FANZINE:

MRR columnist Bryony has a great fanzine called *Modern Hate Vibe*, of which #3 is all I've read. Its focus is hardcore and punk music, it's a half size, and the layout is a screaming, bloody fucking mess of scrawling, badly reproduced fliers / photos and messily pasted cuttings from computer print outs. Bryony succeeds in writing about punk music with a sincerity that stops just short of making me uncomfortable—there's enough bite in the language she uses that I don't feel like someone's trying to sell me a line, but is trying to say something on the level in an involving way. It's difficult to write like this because it's difficult to read like this, but people who can pull it off deserve commendation.

It's a combination of genuine feeling on the author's part, with an awareness that *genuine feeling* too often gets in the way of communicating with others, so the result is either paring language down and writing minimally and directly and scientifically or attempting to approach the subject from sideways with indirect flourish, symbolism and poetry. I appreciate the extremes of both of these worlds, and I'd like to illustrate why with an example.

Bruce Roehrs (RIP) managed the former by using a limited vocabulary, a scarce variety of phrasing and an abundance of exclamation marks. Few people write about punk records with a distinctive style, and Bruce's was minimal and bare and entirely his own. Flicking through old issues of *MRR* and coming across the same limited economy of reference points, the same dedication to reproducing entire lyric booklets, the same good-humored wimp baiting and the same straight forward passion for hardcore music gave the mag a great consistency. He retained the same simple and non-pretentious flavor over many years. He was a scientist of writing on punk and hardcore records, often providing concise sentences of expletives and appreciation in equal doses, many of which provided a more interesting experience than the records he celebrated. I pulled out *Victim In Pain* and gave it the first listen in a while thinking of Bruce, and "Society Sucker" never sounded so great. RIP.

Bryony is a good punk writer in the latter sense, with flourish, poetry, and indirect language. Anyone who appreciated the sneering wit of Sam McPheeters will find something to appreciate here. I could definitely imagine many people confounded by the scattered style she uses, and I think it's refreshing to see someone attempting this kind of writing in a hardcore zine. I haven't read this kind of writing since Neil Bramley (of DRAFT DODGER) hung up his boots, as most people with this kind of talent see themselves above record reviews and tend to discuss the banalities of their life (Al Burian) instead.

In this issue: a sharp over-dramatic introduction—"I put it to you that punk rock may now resemble bowel movement over youth movement, where the only literal movement is a thick uncomfortable lurching of a colostamised culture towards the inevitable" is the best line here, especially for the word "colostamised;" following, an extensive interview with an old man in a band called DOUBLE NEGATIVE; hostile inventive slung toward the "fuzz pop" sound/scene that stops too short of naming names (exactly what bands is she talking about?); a long interview with STUPIDS; a piece titled "Peace Or Annihilation", an articulate expression of a fairly standard punk response to questions of patriotism or nationalism, and for the first time in a long time I felt myself agreeing with a political sentiment in a punk zine; then, a non-interview with FASHION; information on her Dire Records label (check her band, SCEPTRES, while you're at it and while I'm at writing on this zine); there's an interview with Chris Bickel of IN/HUMANITY (she informs that the fanzine is named after one of their songs), and at this point I realized I'd heard little of this band that had made an impact on me but always found this Bickel character an interesting interview subject or tirade author; and, finally, a tour report of her band.

Fuck. A lot there. If you're inclined to skip long paragraphs, I might well summarize—All right you fucks: *Modern Hate Vibe* is a good fucking zine for all you skins and punks!!

AUSTRALIAN RECORDS AND CASSETTES

One of the best new labels anywhere comes out of Sydney. RIP Society have a stellar release history of the best in new Australian punk bands: the first of their records was the stellar RED KROSS/ROYAL TRUX hormonal provocation that the CIRCLE PIT 7" captured, the second a repress of the piss raw TROGGSy blast of Sydney garage punk band STRAIGHT ARROWS. Their three new releases are also hits.

KITCHENS FLOOR have three paranoid songs that have that nicely dragged-around-the-room feeling the miserable VELVETS songs had, with a recording that sounds like it came out of a cramped, moldy laundry (this is also what PINK REASON sound like to me). The lyrics are surprisingly frank, devoid of nuance. I don't like them, but I like the way he sings them, and once again I'm reminded of how little lyric sheets matter to me anymore.

ROYAL HEADACHE, once again, a hit, a great record, I've written too much on this lately. I don't know what the definition of power pop is supposed to be, but it seems to me the bands that I like that are described as power pop are basically just punk bands with pop tunes that write songs about girls. By these criteria, I guess ROYAL HEADACHE are a power pop band. I don't want to revise my definition, but I did want to write something about this band I haven't considered before here. These songs are great in the same way that early DESCENDENTS and RED KROSS tunes are great.

BED WETTIN BAD BOYS have a real audaciously fucked name that would have probably meant something completely different in the 1990s when pop punk bands celebrated goofy shit like this, but since then pop punk embraced the sparkling turds of the American melodic hardcore scene and these bands have names like ANOTHER LOST SECRET or TIME TO REFLECT, leaving the world way open for the BED WETTIN BAD BOYS. The tunes on this are obviously in love with the early REPLACEMENTS sound and immaturity, wide open and somehow both ecstatic with youth but burdened with the weariness of age. Perfect man, that's what I like about the REPLACEMENTS too. I love this EP, these songs are gritty, this is a sloppy pop punk record that doesn't bore me.

All right, quick now: two relatively new Melbourne bands have been playing together a fair bit, and may be of interest to some AFJ readers. First, SUCIO PODER, as I mentioned several issues ago, have written some incredible Spanish/UK style punk songs, and their demo cassette was repressed in Canada recently (on Combat Action Tapes, who I blew a couple issues back already).

Next, BRAINWAVES have just released a demo tape of tunes that remind me of *Inside My Brain*-era ANGRY SAMOANS, but more prominently GORILLA ANGREB (both bands have female vocalists and clean guitar riffs, but whereas GORILLA ANGREB has energy and confidence, this is mainly flat and insecure and needs some boldness). The recordings stops short of raw and just hangs in that muddy, soft area that you'd have come to expect from punk demo tapes, so unless you're a freak for Australian punk, I'd hold out till they get a 7" together as the tunes have definite promise and with a little more confidence and clarity of intent this band will be great.

If you play punk, hardcore, garage noise or any music with a bit of grit and rawness to it, or if you write a fanzine that loosely covers the same sonic territory, and you *don't* live in the US, Japan or Sweden, please get in touch. My address is Daniel Stewart: PO BOX 239 NORTH CARLTON VICTORIA 3054 AUSTRALIA.

Around two years ago a friend of mine, name of Craig Goris, died from cancer. A lot of cancer, too, the result of some genetic fuckup that wasn't anything until he was 22, when it appeared

one day in summer and murdered him in the months that followed. I wanted to write about something serious this column, but I need to avoid the self-pitying dreck I've been shoveling out these past few columns (don't worry, my next mag bleat will address real poignant issues, like being an {extremely} straight white male in the punk community and how I could apparently do anything I want because of this straight white maleness, yet I mostly just jerk off and send text messages to Andy Peterson). Our own Bruce Roehrs is dead two months now, and though I was friends with him, certainly, I can't say I was anywhere as close to him as I was to Craig, so it's about Craig I will write.

(He had this big American face, the kind you don't see much anymore outside certain colleges and high schools in the Midwest, one of those big kind grinning faces that children have but grow out of but sometimes you see them on adults and feel this great trust and peace when you do)

I want to keep this column somewhat concise so I won't stray too far into describing his illness or what happened. At some point it became clear that he would not be getting better, that just the opposite was to occur, that his death was an inexorable ending to a painful and gasping last few months. I was away on tour when he first started to get sick, and while I was crawling across this shitty wide bizarre country those long six weeks, he was splayed out on a hospital bed with concerned men and women in bright white coats poking and prodding him, chicken-scratching onto charts and filling out forms. Eventually they decided it was back cancer, and they moved him up to Stanford, about forty minutes south of San Francisco.

When I returned from tour, I visited him as often as I could, and while seeing him was painful, I had (for perhaps the only time in my life) the clearness of thought to ignore those uncomfortable emotions the sight and thought of him brought up. I spent as much time with him as I could. He eased the weirdness of it all by attempting a sort of fumbling normalcy, so he was still buying records, still scratching at his Hawkwind tattoo, still laughing and pissing on his own and smoking cigarettes (he figured it couldn't hurt at that point, and while I'm no doctor I imagine it didn't exactly help. Denying a dying man a cigarette is an unconscionable, unforgivable act of cruelty that I can't and don't wish to fathom, even for a second). But not everyone visited him. Some couldn't because of packed tight busy schedules, some couldn't because it was easier not to think about, some couldn't because it made them so damn afraid and sad and confused they just sat and shook, or at least I god dam hope they did. He'd ask how these people were doing, and I'd tell him fine and we'd usually leave it at that, lest we make ourselves more uncomfortable than we had to be. When the trips to the record store were cut short because of exhaustion, when he could no longer sit around with us and talk about girls or rock and roll or much of anything at all, that's when I began to worry.

And then he couldn't come to the city anymore and then he was in a wheelchair and wouldn't talk much and then he was in the hospital again and then he was about to die.

I remember that day; Max and I drove down, or rather Max drove while I sat next to him and fiddled distractedly with the stereo, this in response to a phone call his mother had placed to Max or me, I can't remember who and it doesn't matter anyways, saying that Craig was in bad shape and we needed to make it to the hospital as fast as we could. I remember being covered in a numb nervous stinging shock-feeling as we were escorted into this small room. That's what I remember—how it was such a small room, how no one could possibly get better or live in a room that size, and there he was, lying on this complicated bed, wires and tubes sticking out of his skin. I hadn't seem him for a few weeks on account of him being under heavy sedation, being real sick and all, and he had this beard that looked so bad and unhealthy I almost couldn't stand to look at it, didn't even know what it was at first, just looked like some terrible and diseased growth attacking his chin. Once I figured it out I almost started to cry, but I didn't because he'd know what that meant and so I pretended like it was just another day seeing him.

And Max and I sat down and looked at him, just looked. Christ, his face was awful to look at, so awful I swear I'll never forget it; It was all sunken and scared, dark two bright blue and white eyes just staring at us, with this hate and jealousy in them of such a kind that I hadn't seen before or since and hope to never glimpse again. Those eyes stand as the worst thing I've ever seen in my life, and I knew then and there that death was not peaceful, that it was no long rest and respite from this bad life we all live. No, it's a painful terrible thing. He wasn't dying, he was being killed, killed by whatever hideous god lurks in the heavens above, killed by nature and her callous random movements and flicks, killed by cruel cosmic injustice. The look of fear on those eyes will stay with me until the day that I myself gain that look, and when I'm coughing and wheezing and crying on some lonely dark bed in some fucking horrible hospital, a cripple in mind and body. I'll remember those eyes and I'll die afraid. How anyone could believe in anything like God or karma or fairness after looking at a young man's dying eyes is unfathomable to me.

He motioned for a paper and pen with this sickly half-gesture that I couldn't guess the meaning of but someone could because there appeared a pen and paper before him. He tried to write and couldn't, just scrawled this sort of nonsense scribble before he gave up. It was the saddest thing I'd ever seen. He closed his eyes and then opened them again, and then he began breathing hard, this ragged, scary awful breathing that Christ, I can still hear, that Christ I still hear when I want the warm far-off embrace of sleep on particularly grey black evil nights, but can't get it and that's on account of this breathing, this horrible nightmare breathing. And then his eyes went big, big as they could but they still seemed so small and it was like every terrible thing in this world, every wretched ungodly creature was gathered in that room and pressing down on his caved-in chest. (Where once muscles had been now was degenerated thing skin stretched tight over heaving, heaving, failing ribs, where once a man's chest had been was now this small thin thing, this barely beating heart that'd cease as soon as it could). Then this beeping started up from one of the monitors surrounding him, and it beeped in tandem to his ragged exhalations, a sinister deathbeat that curled my fingers and tightened my muscles and told me that Death was in the room, staring and waiting.

And again I looked at his eyes. They said more than anything else ever has, they said I hate you for living, and they said this isn't fair, and most of all they said, screamed, but mostly cried, I see death in front of me and I hate it and I'm not ready for it and please god remember me. Remember me. Don't let me die—I've been nice I've been kind and caring and all that and everything, and they said tragedy and sadness and fear, most of all fear. I could see that he wasn't ready for this, that this wasn't like a movie or a book or anything like that, that this was really happening and a 22 year old who had never really hurt anyone but hadn't ever really loved a love as huge or true as he could've, that hadn't said that to them or him or her and I could see a million things dancing in front of them.

They say your life flashes before your eyes prior to death; I could see that it wasn't his past life flashing, it was the future, all the loves and triumphs and deep despairs that he would've given anything, anything except his life to just feel. Those eyes stand as the worst thing I've ever seen in my life, and I knew then and there that death was not peaceful, that it was no long rest and respite from this bad life we all live. No, it's a painful terrible thing. He wasn't dying, he was being killed, killed by whatever hideous hateful god lurks in the heavens above, killed by nature and her callous random movements and flicks, killed by cruel cosmic injustice. The look of fear on those eyes will stay with me until the day that I myself gain that look, and when I'm coughing and wheezing and crying on some lonely dark bed in some fucking horrible hospital, a cripple in mind and body I'll remember those eyes and I'll die afraid. How anyone could believe in anything like God or karma or fairness after looking at a young mans dying eyes is unfathomable to me.

They told us to leave the room, that they were doing everything they could for him so we left, and then it was apparent we wouldn't be let in, so we did all we could. We went home. The next few days were filled with people who barely knew him bawling like maniacs in front of as many people as possible, as if to cement their opportunistic sadness in the minds of those witnessing these grotesque displays of what was essentially self-pity, and ex-girlfriends who'd treated him less than dirt claiming cosmic connections, all that. His mom started using his MySpace pretending to be him, in some insane way of coping with the guilt, and became an alcoholic.

As for myself, well, I didn't cry when I heard

the news. I don't rightly remember what I did, if I did anything. And the next few days I was silent about it, because every person I saw I hated, hated for ignoring him when he was too depressing to think about or see but now, well, now it was the holocaust and apocalypse rolled into one. I'd experienced death before, heavy death too, my mother's and her parents both, but this was someone close to my age, someone who hadn't made any dumb fatal mistake. This was pure evil chance, and it could've been me or anyone.

I began living differently, more loose. Not quite at first, as I was too horrified and disgusted to do much of anything besides take pills, but I smoke again and now I eat meat and if I want to ask a girl to dinner I ask a girl to dinner, because I realize, I really do, that life is this finite fragile thing that can be shattered like nothing at all. I don't want to someday lie on an uncomfortable bed in a sterile white hospital surrounded by overpaid MDs charting my declining health, and think about the things I haven't done. I make a lot of mistakes, I make a lot of rash and reckless moves and decisions, but I know that I'll die with one or two less regrets than the shit on the street. I've witnessed how awful and lonely death is, I looked into those longing pained eyes that screamed hate and sadness, and they bother me into action and decision. Death is an evil cackling thing and I hate it.

I think it's kind of an open secret that the staff here at *MRR* tend to get kind of giddy from time to time about some things. Whether they be bands (see SEX/VID) or scenes (Spain anyone?), a consensus reality tends to build up from time to time suggesting that there's one particular something almost everyone in the compound can agree on. If you've been paying attention lately, you might have noticed some of that momentum gathering around the Silenzio Statico/LA Raw Ponx scene. I just want to take a moment to assure you all that this hype (if you will) is most totally justified.

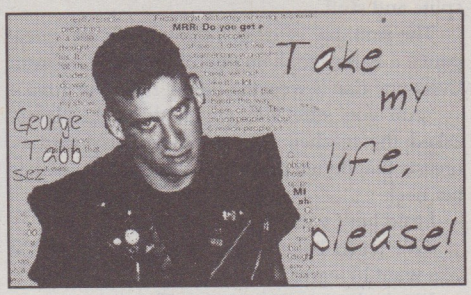
Acting as a collective, these LA kids run the Silenzio Statico record label and screen-printing business, book gigs, run a print zine, a video zine, a radio show and a record store. They're basically a one-stop punk scene! Add to that their strong politics, with a particular focus on immigration and social justice issues in all of these projects and you have a group of people who are really changing their scene, and even city, for the better. Point is, it's time to hop on the bandwagon. Please check out the new EPs by collective-affiliated bands TUBERCULOSIS and RAYOS X that were just released by Lengua Armada, and keep your eyes peeled for an upcoming 12" (co-released with Spain's Discos Enfermos) that will feature the full TUBERCULOSIS, RAYOS X, POLISKITZO and ASKO demos. Also, stop by www.myspace.com/rawponxla to see the video zine and a list of upcoming gigs. Great shit from some of the most motivated punx I know of.

Last issue I had the great pleasure of reviewing a recent bootleg of the OHLO SECO demos. Coincidentally or not, Nada Nada Discos www.nadanadadiscos.com just released a beautiful reissue of their legendary *Botas, Fuzis, Capacetes* EP. The original layout is reproduced with a full color insert, and best of all, no remastering! This platter sounds just as nasty as it did when it was first released. It's an import, so it might be a bit pricey depending on where you are, but it's one of the essential records in the hardcore canon and I guarantee this reissue is cheaper than tracking down the original.

Fuck, out with the old and in with the new. I was stoked to pick up the REVENGE-CORE demo recently. These kids (and they look pretty young) aren't exactly rewriting the rulebook with their spiky jacket d-beat worship, but the songwriting is surprisingly mature and some of the parts recall *Who Killed Dove?*-era CROW. When they keep it short and tight as in "Police Stomp" (entire lyric: "Freedom police/It's really disgusted/It's so mess/Fuck you police"), they rip it up pretty good. The bass player has some serious chops too. The demo comes in a great, obviously homemade, color-copied 7" sleeve with adorably punk pics of the band members and lyrics. See if you can get one off of them, I think these kids are going places. Or they'll break up when one of 'em gets into house music. Either way, contact REVENGE-CORE at http://ip.tosp.co.jp/I.asp?I=skunxuk.

Finally, for this month's dose of metal-punk, we've got the PARASITE *Sin* EP. Granted, the needle is definitely leaning toward the metal side on this one, but the riffage is at least as much GASTUNK as it is IRON MAIDEN and the drumming is more tribal/KILLING JOKE-style than metallic. This is good stuff, with a galloping A-side ("Doreijima") that recalls the RANDY UCHIDA GROUP. a bit and a slower dirge on the flip that slowly builds to an epic fist-pumping finish. This single would be right at home on the High Society Satanic Records roster, but it was released by the UK's Tadpole Records (6 Gardner Street, Brighton, BN1 1UP, UK). In true metal-punk style, this release features terribly pixilated pencil art of the grim reaper tooling around a graveyard in a hellhound-drawn coffin-mobile. Awesome.

One last thing: I turned in last issue's column before I heard about Bruce's passing. While I didn't know him nearly as well as most of the shitworkers, Bruce was one of the first people I met at *MRR* and he was amazingly welcoming and friendly (and it's true that he had the manliest handshake on Earth!). I always enjoyed running into him at HQ, and I just wanted to add my voice to the chorus saying, "Bruce, you will be missed."



Continued from last month...

Joy of Movement was the name of the place. It was located on Lafayette, near Fourth Street, in New York City, and was a health club for ballerinas. Really. I joined there because my girlfriend at the time, Allison, took classes there and also worked out. They had a large weight room, with lots of exercycles, stairmasters, and all that stuff. Plus, the girls there were hot. I mean, really hot. In their little leotards, flat ballet shoes, and pulled back hair. I swear, I walked around the place with an erection all the time.

When I first started to stay in shape there, I stuck to the exercycles. Then I figured out how to use the stairmasters, and the Nordic-Track thing. I'd do there what I used to do at my house. Wear headphones, and scream along to really aggressive songs. But at Joy of Movement, it was light. So I'd always close my eyes.

Of course, everyone there thought I was nuts. Insane. Homicidal. After I'd get done working out, I'd open my eyes, and find everyone around me gone. When I'd exit the workout room, I'd see people start to trickle back in. Pussies.

One day, while screaming along to a Metallica song, one of the guys who worked there tapped me on the shoulder. He snapped me out of the trance I was in so I yelled at him.

"What the fuck do you want?" I said. I couldn't help it. My heart was beating a million beats per second, and my adrenaline was pouring out of my ears.

"Dude," he said, "*Ride The Lightning* rules. Flash before my eyes, now it's time to die!"

After working out, I talked to the guy. His name was Dennis, and soon we became great friends. Everyday, after I'd work out, we'd hang out on the fire-escape, overlooking Fourth Street, and drink beer. It was great.

"You ever think of taking a class here?" asked Dennis, one day, as we were dropping spit bombs on people crossing the street from Tower Records.

"Nah," I said to Dennis, "that's for wimps."

"George," he said with all seriousness, "if you want pussy, that's where you'll get it. In those classes. They're full of pussy. Pussy to your left. Pussy to your right. Pussy in front of you. Pussy in back of you. Pussy-rama!"

It sounded good to me, so I asked Dennis what class to take. He told me any of them, because they were all filled with pussy. And gay guys. So I had no competition.

I chose modern dance. Don't ask me why. I'm not really sure. I think because it sounded easy, and the class description said lots of stretching. I figured I get to see a lot, watching chicks do

splits and stuff.

The first day of class I show up in my sweat pants, a False Prophets t-shirt, and my sneakers. Everyone else is wearing tights. Even the guys.

"Are you sure you are in the right class?" asked the teacher. She was hot. Early thirties, breasts that defied gravity, and legs all the way to her neck.

I told her I was.

"We teach ballet here," she explained. "Do you want to learn?"

I looked around the room. The girls were so adorable.

"Hell yeah!" I yelled.

The whole room laughed.

That night, after my first modern dance/ballet class, I went home so sore that I swore I'd never, ever, ever, take another class. My neck was sore. My back was sore. My arms were sore. My legs were sore. My groin was sore. Really sore. I think it was trying to do those damn splits.

I used to think ballet was easy. But after that, I knew better. That is the hardest stuff in the world. Those girlie guys who prance around in leotards make me look like a pussy. Which, I guess, is not really that hard to do.

I went back to modern dance class the next week, and the next, and the next. Soon I was really getting into it. I learned how to plea, and first, second, third, fourth, and fifth position. Hell, I was becoming a regular ballerina guy. I even thought of buying tights and those flat shoes. So it was a good thing that the place went bankrupt and closed down before I could get a tutu.

Of course that left me with no place to workout, and out of some money, since the place ripped everyone off who was a current member. Oh well.

The next gym I joined was called Mega-Fitness. On Broadway. Nice place. Big. But kinda dirty. And the guys that worked out there were, well, guys. Big muscle guys. Like you seen on ESPN. And they didn't move away when I screamed "Bastard sons begat your cunting daughters, Promiscuous mothers with incestuous fathers, Ingrate souls condemned for eternity, Sustained by immoral observance a domineering deity," along with Slayer. They just smiled. And when I'd get off the bike, or stairmaster, they'd give me looks like they were gonna kick my ass.

And the showers at that place. I really didn't like those too much. They were like the kind I had in junior high school. One big open room. With nozzles. On the walls, and between men's legs. And sometimes I'd see those nozzles standing up, straight. Not fun. Soon, I waited to bathe till I got home.

Now I'm at a new place, and it's fine. It's a very small gym, with only a few stairmasters, exercycles, and treadmills. I work out there late at night, and usually no one is around to hear me scream curses, praise Satan, yell "gabba gabba hey" or break the equipment, so things are OK.

Almost OK. Although I've been "regular" for years now, with my regiment of exercise, Metamucil, and salads, I recently discovered I have hemorrhoids. I think I now scream louder on the toilet than I ever did on an exercycle. I'm back at it. Scaring the hell out of my neighbors. Oh well. Nick, my step-dad, told me I should try Preparation H. I did. It tastes awful. Whatever.

Take my life, please.

www.myspace.com/helpgeorgetabb

Dante's Inferno for the Xbox360 from EA is fucking amazing. Don't listen to the dumb ass reviewers who say it's just a lame *God Of War* clone. It's not. I mean, yeah, it's a lot like *GOW*, which is a good thing... and it also has some really *killer* moves and the best porno monsters I have ever seen. Dead zombie chicks with flathead screw-drivers for dicks does it for me! Yowza!

Jett, my youngest pup, just ate my last cell phone. Oh well, it was three years old and I'm surprised it lasted that long. So I broke my promise to myself and got an iPhone, which as it turns out, is cheaper than what I had! Yay! OK, anyway, I had *no idea* how many great games there are for the little bastard. *Iron Warfare* is one of them. You drive around in tanks controlled by the way you tilt the phone! Then you press the shoot button and blow the shit outta other tanks! They got all sorts of games plus you can play online! Punk rock! Another cool game is *Geo Play Golf*. It is exactly what it says. Using the phone's GPS you play *virtual golf* anywhere! Fucking amazing! I just played a round from my building, across the street, through the deli, around the corner, and sunk a birdie at the bus stop! This is so cool that the smile on my face was I swing my virtual club lets all the chicks know just what a real dork I am! *Wire Way* is a cute little game from Konami, where you shoot this monkey guy into a UFO through bouncy wires. Weird... but isn't everything Japanese? It's addictive as hell. As is *Air Brawn*, a really old school game where you shoot little guys in helicopters and tanks and all. Very stick figure, very very old school, and very very fun! Get this! And then there is *Duke Nukem*... the whole freakin' game from 3-D Realms for 99 cents. Whoa! Gotta get used to this first person control, though! And there's lots more, but I'll tell you about them next month!

Thank you Claire Kelly from the UK. She did a benefit for me in London, home of Dr. Who and Captain Jack! Great bands played including Hogwash, who you should really check out! Awesome band!

I didn't think it was possible, but the new GWAR album rocks! Yay!!!

In high school (at my biggest) I was 270 pounds. It was kinda fucked up. I had a lot of depression issues obviously, but unlike many of my peers in the semi-affluent high school I went too my mom didn't have the money (much less the motivation) to get me psych meds, so I just sucked it up and also ate a lot. These days I see a lot of fat-positive affirmation going around which I think is soooooooo cool and so welcoming and it's one of those things where you hope the rest of the world becomes emotionally intelligent enough to catch up with the intention behind it: not just mere "acceptance" but *true love* for all bodies big, small, and in between. This is of course the hope but there are these shards of reality that stick you right in the heart...

From everything I've gathered people are nicer to you when you're skinnier. When I first started to lose weight every random person would start to comment, "*Wow*, you're slimming down!" or "Are you on a diet? Keep up the good work!" I *hated that shit*. Complimenting someone on random weight loss is *bullshit* and losing weight doesn't always denote that some healthy thing is happening. Weight loss *could* mean anything from depression and illness to being too broke to eat. (A girlfriend of mine coined the term *suspiciously skinny*). But I took these back handed affirmations to heart and kept moving forward with them. I had no choice really. When you're handed shit you hold on to any positivity you can even when it's masking something waaaaay more fucked up. My weight made me a target at home as well as school. My parents would make *me alone* stand in the living room and do old skool calisthenics until *they* got tired and constantly talked to me about how if I ever wanted to get laid I was going to have to lose weight. Ain't that some cold shit? (What's funny is both my parents are old and fat now and *I looooooooove it*).

There's this weird discrimination that goes on with fat people. Like there's this constant assumption that because you're big you're lazy or not active (in truth I was a ball of energy even at my biggest!) and that by proxy your quality of life is lower than "normal" skinny people. This thing is ingrained us and the big reason I'm soooo not for it is ultimately it's just one more layer of bullshit we have to fight on our journey along the way of learning to love ourselves—one more dumb *ism*.

After high school I became vegan for a bit and started getting my bike punk on and I lost more and more weight. By the age of 19 I had successfully lost 110 pounds (it took two years) and have maintained my weight until this day... Being big, though, or rather *other people's reactions* to me being big, had all but ripped apart my self-esteem. I walked around with my head down a lot and acted like a damage case, 'cause I was. Luckily, by that time too I had found punk and now realized it was okay to be a freak, and most importantly it was perfectly okay to hate *other* people and their opinions that were bumming me out. I had that type of rebel confidence, but still needed to find the confidence that stemmed form a more natural place inside.

I wanted more general awareness of my body so I started dancing. Ballet, modern, and African... I wanted to explore all the styles. I liked dancing in the community college network

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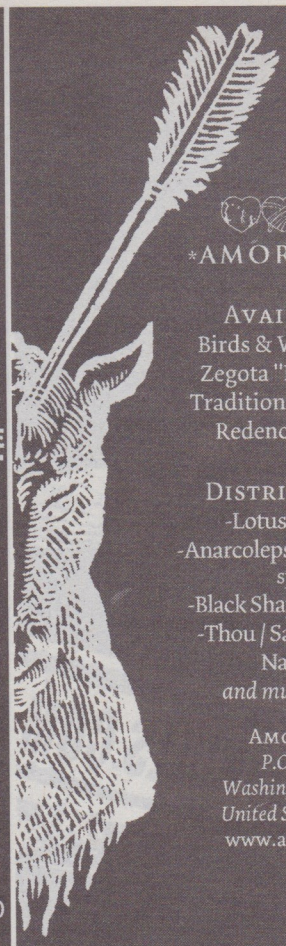

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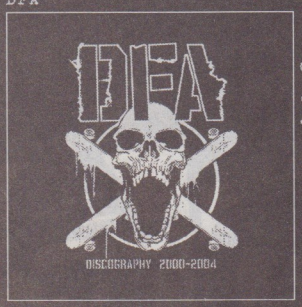

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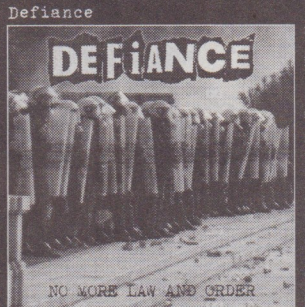

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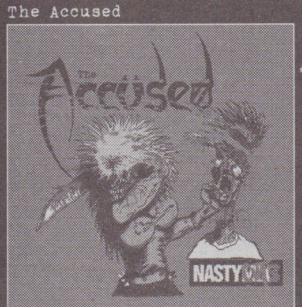

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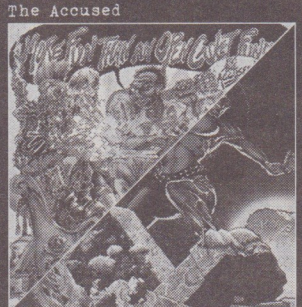

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and felt validated that a lot of my African dance teachers reflected many body types big and small and showcased that we all approach movement from different spaces and levels and abilities. This movement training taught me the one *big* basic trick of life: walking confidently. Simple shit. I could not believe how very slight it was. Simply getting into the habit of walking with your head up and shoulders back can really change your outlook and also the way people perceive you. Who knew?

Sometimes I lament over how much I stress over my weight. There is this inner fear that peaks up every time I gain ten pounds. I obsess over it immediately, start cutting meals… it's like a fear reaction. I keep watch over it more, though, and try not to let it control me. The day I learn to master this reaction to my inevitable weight gain/loss cycle is the day I think that I will (FINALLY) be 100% comfortable with my weight.

The *MRR* management and yours truly wish to apologize for the typographical errors that permeated April's column. Also, as you've probably surmised, that column was a spoof in the same spirit as previous April Fool's columns, though admittedly not nearly as clever. Come on, do you think I'd *really* write for *Billboard*? Besides, I have a certain salary in mind and they'd probably never come close to it.

*****

BRING ON THE VINYL (and a CD or two)

See that record I'm grasping in the photo right above? That's from the French band LOST BOYS and now I've got two new records by this fine combo to grasp in my sweaty little paws—one of 'em a new four song 7", *Work, Life, Regret* and the other a split 12" with their countrymen THE IRRADIATES. The 7" is another cut 'n' slash burst of no-nonsense, fast snot-punk. A revved up tandem of garage and early '80s hardcore styles, although slowing it a tad for "Some Won't Come Back Tonight." The perfect compliment to the caffeine surging through my veins at the moment. And if you remember that song by ROCKWELL, "Somebody's Watching Me" (I'd rather not), the same kind of paranoia rings through the lyrics of "They're Watching," but they also note that folks aren't watching the watchers, and are satisfied with their complacency on "Keep Your Smile." The cover choice is also inspired—a bolt through MIA's "I Hate Hippies," an early song from those guys that hasn't been flogged to death elsewhere. Their pair of songs on the 12" are slightly different—an older California sound with a surfy inflection for "Big Day Big Fun" and straight *into* the surf for the instrumental "Neist Point." Well-played but kinda ho-hum. THE IRRADIATES are more of a straight-up surf-punk band, also offering one instrumental and one vocal track and the latter, "When The Birdmen Flew," is a catchy rocker. The LOST BOYS solo 7" kind of blows this split out of the water (sorry). Both of 'em are multi-label releases and you can get info through LOST BOYS' site at www.lostboys.fr.

Speaking of no-nonsense punk, you could probably say the same thing about NINPULATORS on their 2009 demo CD (OK, I'm late). West Coast thrash and skate punk are the main musical tools—not an uncommon approach these days (see SMART COPS, HJERTESTOP and many more)—but the basic sounds laid down by this Hungarian band are quite good. Their vocalist Viktor claims that the lyrics in Hungarian are "translations of either early MADBALL or late DEAD MOON songs," but I think he might be pulling the wool over my eyes. Who knows—maybe he's telling the truth. I'm too lazy to find out. (Teenage Riot, www.myspace.com/teenageriotrecordsbp)

When I was a youngster, my family vacationed a few times at a blissful place called the Wyonegonic in North Bridgton, ME. It was somewhat run-down but there were comfy cabins, delicious meals in the main building, swimming in the pool or nearby pond, shuffleboard, etc. It still operates as a camp, but I haven't been there in 40 years and have no idea what it's like these days. But punk rock *does* exist there. PINKO AND THE ACTION BOYS, from the adjoining town of Bridgeton, have been around for many years but *Louder Than Everything* is the band's first 12" release. Nothing sedate or restful here, it's whomping high-energy hardcore punk with agitated, gritted-teeth vocals and a rough and fast *oeuvre*. Yeah, the drumming loses the beat once in awhile but these guys have such an unaffected feel that it's impossible not to love it. The packaging is superlative—clear vinyl (one of five colors), a hand-screened inner sleeve, CD version and a "Pinko Moxie Army Field Manual" booklet about their "unconventional warfare tactics and techniques." This tome not only provides the lyrical matter (along with a guitar pick tucked inside!) but also lays out the agenda. The hopped-up-on-Moxie PINKO are into political as well as musical subversion, keeping a wary-yet-winking eye not only on oppressive forces but also laying down the punk rock law, demanding the return of the circle pit. Not much to add except, as they say on "Organization Of A Raid Force," "Up the fucking PMA!" Amen, comrades. (www.pinkoandtheactionboys.com)

The stream of 7" releases by THE STATE continues unabated. Add two more to the collection—*Nihil Ex Nihilo* (Punks Before Profits) and *Excommunicated* (Statement). There are a pair of absolute scorchers on the former—"Destroyed Rock City" and "Vixen," both featuring great guitar work by Art Tendler that channels Mr. Ron Asheton and dumps it into a punk rock acid bath. *Excommunicated* is the newer recording and release. It starts with another rocked-up anthem, "Dropout," the best of the four songs here, although "Excommunicated" and "Reign Of Terror" have plenty of fieriness, as well. (www.myspace.com/statenoillusions and www.punksbeforeprofits.org)

From Punks Before Profits records to No Profit Records, which is the home of a 7" by SCC, which stands for SLUTTY CHURCH CHIXXX. Subtle… OK, *not* subtle, especially the close-up photo of a bible resting on a woman's thigh and I imagine about to be used in a quite unholy fashion. That lack of subtlety also applies to the raw musical contents. Loutish hardcore punk and fairly inept, sad to say. They sound pissed off as hell and I imagine I'd be the same way if I had to live in Alabama, in the middle of the Bible Belt, to mention one of the song titles. That doesn't change the fact this isn't that great. (2724 Glastonbury Rd., Apex, NC 27539, www.myspace.com/noprofitrecords)

Speaking of bands with provocative monikers, how about SLIMY CUNT & THE FIST FUCKS? Ah, the band name some people love to hate. In fact, SCFF revel in being hated, being the "bastards with big mouths." Mean, mid-tempo punk bruiseability with Opie's agitated bray at the fore—even a few demonic grunts to start things off. This is middle-finger, anti-social punk for the rejected and, uh, anti-social. Those who never quite adjusted either to "norm" society or the elitist punk pecking order. When all those here-today-gone-tomorrow types have moved on to their Brooklyn apartments and lame bands, the SCCF boys will continue to haunt Boston's punk demimonde. What did a certain DC band say years ago? Hated and proud! (Patac, www.patacrecords.com)

SCFF bass player "Lord Cuntington" is actually Boston punk legend Mike McCarthy and his socially deviant combo FOR THE WORSE return on a split 7" with Canadian punx WEDNESDAY NIGHT HEROES. One original and one cover from each band. "Revenge" by FTW is a mid-tempo punk basher, kind of a departure from their fast hardcore sound with loud riffing and topped off with Mr. McCarthy's piercing yelp. Meanwhile, THE BRUISERS' "American Night" is given a buzzsaw airing. Both songs were recorded in '06. As for WNH, "No Control" is a feisty 'n' catchy full-bore anthem and their cover is a decent enough rendition of the ZERO BOYS' "Civilization's Dying." (Patac, www.patacrecords.com/Give Praise: www.givepraiserecords.com)

BUKKAKE BOYS were one of the pleasant surprises of last year's No Way Fest and they make a mighty return on their second EP. Uncorking a clattering barrage of hardcore agitation somewhere between early POISON IDEA and COC, favoring raw production and a whole bunch of bile. In the same spirit as SCFF, the BUKKAKE BOYS know who their enemies are and express it with "Elite" and "Trend Junkie." There's a liberating ugliness in this band's sound. (1102 N Greensboro St, Carrboro, NC 27510, www.sorrystaterecords.com)

THE CATBURGLARS' crude garage-meets-'77-style punk continues to push all the right buttons on their self-titled LP. Mighty guitar buzz, drumming that sounds as though the cymbals are metal trash can covers and they prove

themselves to be consummate wise-asses with songs like "I Wanna Be John Goodman," "She Came From The Internet" and "Smoking Is Popular." Judging by the overflowing ashtray on the back cover, I'd imagine they're trying to win some kind of punk rock popularity contest. Well, they've got my vote. And while their consumption of Pabst reveals questionable taste, I imagine that it makes more sense than if they imbibed Heineken. Besides, Frank Booth from "Blue Velvet" would probably hate them for it, not that he particularly liked anyone. There's something irresistible about all of this rockin' mayhem. It'll make you downright giddy. These guys could have been a Rip Off Records band and that's meant as a compliment. Bonus points for the logo on the lyric sheet ripping off the DICTATORS' logo from *Go Girl Crazy*. (Criminal IQ, 3057 N. Rockwell, 2nd Floor, Chicago, IL 60618, www.criminaliq.com)

If THE CATBURGLARS watch too much TV (after all, they have a song called "Late Night TV") that certainly applies to the SOUTHSIDE STRANGLERS and their debut EP *Too Much TV*. Pretty sharp analysis, eh? This band has Kenny and Brandon from GOVERMENT WARNING indulging their more rockin 'n' rollin' inclinations. Kenny adds a bit of swaggering bravado to his vocals while maintaining the snottiness and the songs are ass-kickers devoid of any sort of cock rock cheesiness—the semi-raw production prevents that from happening. (Grave Mistake, PO Box 12482, Richmond, VA 23241, www.gravemistakerecords.com)

I *loathe* "promo pack" CDs and seldom review them but *Public Square,* the new album by THIS MOMENT IN BLACK HISTORY, is too good to ignore (it's a vinyl-only release, by the way). A tumultuous, cacophonous rock 'n' roll joyride. That's not really giving you much to go on, is it? It also wouldn't help if I said this band doesn't really sound like anyone else. What you have is a fist-pumping amalgam of punk energy and some hard rockin' '70s impulses filtering through. It's loud, guitar-oriented rock, although there are also organ shadings. They don't veer that far from the nervy/edgy thrust all that often—well, except for the brief hip-hop throwaway "My Notes." When I say you hear some funk in the bass-line of "Photonegative," I'm not talking about JAMES BROWN or SLY. I mean funk as in GRAND FUNK. Somewhere, Mel Schacher is smiling (Mel was GF's bass-player, in case you couldn't figure it out). There's a little more of that "red album" GRAND FUNK (and maybe some SABBATH) for the concluding "Precinct." The tornado-like "Theophylline" conjures up the best of Amphetamine Reptile noise with a dollop of Jesus Lizard. Then there's the sonic eruption of "MFA" and jarring groove of "90% Tone." I imagine there's a conscious brazenness in all of this rockitude but it still hooks you. (1658 N. Milwaukee Ave., #284, Chicago, IL 60647, www.smogveil.com)

*****

IN MEMORY OF BRUCE...

I never got to meet Bruce Roehrs in person. Ellen and I were in SF a couple of summers ago and I had it in the back of my mind that I'd try to get in touch with him and see about joining him for a few beers at that bar he always mentioned. After reading the outpouring of reminiscences and tributes to Bruce, it's obvious he was universally loved and respected and a really unique character. I read about such exploits as selling acid for GRAND FUNK RAILROAD, about his love for all styles of music, including the fact that he owned every record FATS DOMINO ever released and the first record he bought was the 13TH FLOOR ELEVATORS' *You're Gonna Miss Me*. It's obvious he lived and breathed music and never got jaded, that his enthusiasm never wavered—every "FUCK YES!" that punctuated his writing seemed genuine and sincere. I found that goddamned inspiring, since he had a decade on me and there are times when I *do* feel jaded as hell. From what I read, he was able to intelligently converse on just about any topic, not just music. As someone said on a message board where there was a thread paying tribute, "he lived life to the FULLEST." It makes me think that's something we'd all better do every single day, because who knows how long that life's going to be. I still hope I'll have a chance to meet Bruce at the bar someday and the first round is on me, ya fuck!

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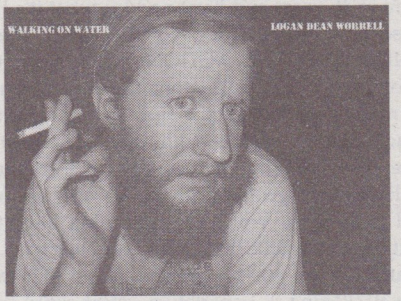


I was gonna write this about Bruce, but I'm not ready for that yet. Instead I'm gonna write about something he'd want me to write about: rock 'n' roll. He always fucked with me about writing for a punk magazine and not having it all be about fucking punk. So here it goes. Also, I'm gonna write it in the style of Bruce.

Holy fuck shit!!!!! Chicago hardcore coming at you blindfolded with a pillowcase full of *fucking bricks*!!! CANADIAN RIFLE killing it with their ragtag brand of melodic punk. Some would call it pop punk, but that shit sucks, *so fuck that*! Jordan from Residue Records has been putting out some serious shit as of late—NO SLOGAN, DAYLIGHT ROBBERY, DEFECT DEFECT, and of course the powerhouse known as SACRED SHOCK!!! Jumping Jesus on a pogo stick!!!! Chicago is back in the game for all you punk rockers out there. I just got a hold of the MANIPULATION single and it's quite a ripper. FASHIONABLE IDIOTS put this hot slab of wax out. *Check it out!!!!*

OK, OK, that's weak and I know it. Weaker than usual. Even for me. No one can even come close to the genius of Roehrs. What I'm gonna write about this month is gay sex. Yes, boys and girls. Hot, buff, gay sex. My gracious host in Milwaukee is a "bear" and a close friend, for that matter. I'm sure many of you know what a bear is, but just bear with me for a sec, will ya? A bear is a larger hairy gay man. A bear is a lover, a fighter, and a friend. A bear will fuck you right and hold you tight. What's not to love? Lugs, my friend, has really given me an inside look into this subculture within a subculture in the past few weeks. Lugs has been shoving this shit down my throat for years (no pun intended), but until recently I never knew how far this shit reached. I learned some things that I cannot put into words, but goddamnit, it's my duty as a serious journalist to try. Not because they're gross or sinful or whatever, but because I'm jealous as a motherfucker. These dudes go on cruises, Bear Runs, and conventions. Are you kidding me? If you put me in a room full of cute girls with shitty hand tattoos (who actually wanted to fuck me) and crates full of poppers (speculation, no idea if bear conventions have actual crates full of poppers) I'd be all over that shit. I might actually attempt to fuck my brains out. It's got to be the most amazing place on earth. Like an adult Disneyland with none of the children shit. A cruise ship? Are you kidding me? You get me and Greg Daly on a ship full of fine girls headed for Jamaica with an open bar and son, we will sink that fucking ship. Or at the very least come back in handcuffs. For sure create an international incident. Lugs told me all about it. Just hot buff dudes with no shirts and very few inhibitions. Just lube and good vibes all around. Cool lube too. The kind that comes in honey bears. That is something anybody can get behind, gay or straight.

On my birthday Lugs took me to Chicago to stay with some of his teammates on his all-bear softball team. Two dudes built like linebackers answered the door. I wasn't sure if they were gonna fuck me or fight me, but judging from the cleanliness of their home I gathered pretty quickly that these men had zero interest in a hobo-looking motherfucker like me. There was a massive TV, a Nintendo Wii, and a kitchen full of hot delicious food. We just kinda sat around and shot the shit. They schooled me on the game of bear and got me hip to the lingo. Now, in straight fucking, we have our own little terms, like first base, second base, etc. However in the bear world they have onesies, twosies, and threesies, all the way up to fivesies. From what I gather, fivesies are something that I cannot physically perform. Something to do with being able to suck a dick thorough a butthole. I'm not sure, there was so much information to absorb I got a headache. Twosies is slightly confusing, however. It's a blowjob and as best as I can remember from my youth, that would count as somewhere around fourth base. Threesies is anal. Seriously? What's left, man?! In my sexual lexicon it don't get much more than anal. I've never even gotten to do that! Four and five gotta be some form of ritual sacrifice. Motherfuckers move fast. I respect the shit out of that. Dave and Owen, our hosts in Chicago, were an absolute delight. Solid dudes, and it was a breath of fresh air seeing two people really in love with each other. The conversation was soooo raw. They'd ask me ques-

tions about fucking, I'd ask them questions about fucking. They seemed to be really intrigued with "squirters" (female ejaculation). Unfortunately, I didn't have nearly enough insider info on the subject, but they didn't seem to be that upset. Note to self: do squirter research for Dave and Owen. I think they thought I was crazy, but I didn't care. I really loved being around them. I lived at an LGBT compound sorta place in Austin, but it just wasn't informative for me. I needed more and these fine gentlemen had it all. Just beacons of knowledge ready to divulge information to a little straight man such as myself. It's now known that in the scene I would be known as an "otter," which is adorable. Dave really wants me to shave and cut my hair and maybe for my birthday next year I'll do just that. Anything for my dudes. Also, you feel so tough walking down the street with six giant guys. Not allowing myself to starting fights with passersby was a challenge, but I didn't lose my cool in front of the big dawgs. If I ever get married (which I won't), my groomsmen would be Martin's old man Sam, my Chicago dudes, Scott Moore, and Lugs, just to blow the minds of my future in-laws. Not to mention the bachelor party would be off the chain.

Why can't I be gay? I'd be so good at it. I'm sexually liberated, the taste of semen doesn't bother me, and I look great in flannel. I can taste the glory of it, I just can't cross over. Maybe someday I'll step up my game. I just wanna fly. Fly like a fucking eagle. A big, gay eagle.

Send bullshit to ldworrell@gmail.com

One year ago, I was fired.

Not laid off—fired. In a layoff, you go home until the factory calls you back to work. I got fired.

Everyone knew there would be a bloodbath. Management tried to keep it secret. But we knew.

Human resources experts say mass firings should take place on a Friday. Worker bees are used to going home for the weekend. Duh.

Mine took place on a Thursday. Which was my fault. A couple of weeks earlier, when management still believed that their big layoff was a big secret, I had told my boss I wanted that Friday off. They rescheduled the firings for me. To my erstwhile coworkers: Sorry about harshing your Friday.

When it came, I knew there was a good chance I'd be on the death list. It wasn't rocket science: My boss didn't like me. "Painful as it may be, a layoff is a good time to terminate marginal employees," wrote Guy Kawasaki in *The Art of the Layoff*. Painful for the employee. Fun for the boss. "Marginal" is corporate-ese for disliked by one's boss.

I worked three days a week for a company called United Media, which syndicates comic strips like *Dilbert* and *Peanuts* to newspapers. It is owned by E.W. Scripps, a media conglomerate based in Cincinnati. My title was editor of acquisitions and development. I was a talent scout: I recruited cartoonists and writers, worked with them to craft their features into saleable features, then edited them after they launched. It was fun. It was also hard. On several occasions, I was pressed to do things I thought were unethical, things that screwed cartoonists and writers. As a cartoonist and writer myself, I refused.

My reviews were mostly positive. But I was given two bits of negative feedback: I didn't seem to care about filling out forms (there were a lot of forms). And I sided with the "talent" rather than the company.

I began to suspect the axe was going to fall months before it did, when Lisa—Lisa was my boss—dithered about, then refused to approve, my travel to the 2009 San Diego Comic Con. Sure, times were tight, especially in the media business. But I'd gone in 2007 and 2008. And other execs were getting their travel approved. Lisa went to Germany for a book fair. Hmm.

Lisa harassed me relentlessly. She gave me impossible tasks with no chance of success: "Develop a turnkey solution for newspaper websites." Citing the flimsiest of excuses, she canceled projects she had previously greenlighted. I was an executive; she assigned me to menial tasks previously left to junior editors. She insulted me during staff meetings—"Why don't you do your job, Ted? For once?"

In retrospect I realize she had just given up trying to goad me into quitting.

Sitting fake-casually on the big red sofas by the *Peanuts* ephemera in the lobby that Thursday morning were two huge goons. Each wore those nametags you get when you visit an office. Subtle.

I closed my office door and called a friend to discuss my sense of impending doom. "I've been through it six times," he told me. "Here's how it'll happen. Lisa will ask you: 'Can you step in for a minute?' You'll go in. Someone from HR will be there."

I hung up. I worked on a memo about how the company should adapt to the changing syndication market by offering marketing and management services to freelance, non-syndicated cartoonists and other content providers. I CC-ed my fellow execs, most of whom already knew what I was about to learn. Send. A half-hour passed. No replies. The phone rang. It was Lisa. "Ted? Can you step in for a minute?" she asked. I walked down the hall, turned left and walked into her office. Carol from HR was sitting under the stuffed Dilbert.

"As you know, the blah blah problems in the business blah blah position is being eliminated blah blah blah not acquiring new properties blah there's a meeting at eleven for everyone who's being reduced blah blah blah blah blah—"

"Reduced?"

You've heard the euphemisms: Downsizing. Rightsizing. Me, I was part of a "reduction in force."

I had been fired from other jobs. I got fired when I was younger and even snottier than I am now. I came late, left early, took long lunches. "Get the hell out of here!" my boss at the local supermarket yelled at my bratty seventeen year old self. "You're worthless! A slacker!" I didn't argue. He was right.

But I had never been "laid off."

They say getting laid off is better than being "fired for cause." You qualify for unemployment benefits. It looks better to future prospective employers (ha! as though those still existed). Getting laid off isn't personal.

For me, that was the problem.

True, if there's anything worse than having to have a job, it's losing one. Once you're on the way out the door, the details of how it goes down don't really matter. You don't know how you're going to pay your bills. Will you lose your home? Will you end up living in your car? Those are the big questions.

Somehow, though, how they do it—how they fire you—matters.

I prefer the personal approach.

If there's a moment that calls for honesty, it's firing someone. If Lisa had called me into her office and told me: "Ted, it's like this: I don't like you. I can't work with someone I don't like. I used to trust you and your judgment, I used to appreciate what you did, but I've changed my mind. It's over. You're fired. Go home," I still would still have had that hole-in-your-stomach feeling for the next few months. But I would have respected her.

It would have been personal. Honest.

Instead, I got Carol from HR.

It wasn't Carol-from-HR's fault. She did what she was told to do, no doubt by someone in Cincinnati who had never so much as laid eyes on me or the other seven people sitting around the table in the conference room, staring at the thick pile of documents in the E.W. Scripps folder she had handed us. Elsewhere, at other Scripps-owned companies around the country, similar meetings were being held. I wondered: were they simultaneous? You know, to allow for different time zones?

Scripps is a cheap company. The previous year, a perfect employee evaluation earned a Scripps worker a four-percent raise. Next came a pay freeze, and with it a lie: a pledge not to lay anyone off. The severance offer was consistent with their previous tightwaddery: four weeks pay.

Whatever.

"The sooner you get the severance agreement signed and sent to me," Carol repeated, "the sooner you'll get paid." I flipped through the lengthy document. There was no way I could sign it. Among the provisions: I could never work for another media company the rest of my life.

If I'd signed it, writing this column would be a breach of contract.

For a lousy four weeks of severance.

There was a deadline by which to sign. As it approached, Carol emailed me. We talked on the

phone, and again when I came into the office to pick up my personal items. I told her about the media company provision. Would they delete it? "It's a reduction of force," she replied. "We can't change it."

I had discussed it with several lawyers. One said it was so breathtakingly overreaching that no judge would enforce it in a court of law. "But a 'reduction of force' isn't a legal term," I said. "It doesn't mean anything. You can delete that section if you want to."

She refused.

"Don't worry," she said, "we wouldn't enforce that part." Sure.

She seemed surprised that I didn't trust them.

Six months later, Scripps bought the Travel Channel for $181 million.

Ted Rall is working on a radical political manifesto for publication this fall. His website is www.tedrall.com.

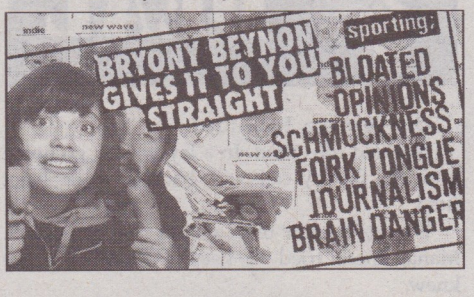
This month I would like to talk about back catalogs and reissues. If your store or distro has made it this far, I think there is some cause for hope. Record labels are suffering from the fall of CD sales and lack of interest in new bands and are starting to dig into the vaults and do vinyl reissues of classic material. Experience has shown that demand for hardcore vinyl has never gone away, especially in the realm of classic titles. However, labels lured by cheap CD product and *progressing* into post punk or indie realms have kept a lot of classic material off the market. Now that CD sales are in the tank, many labels are turning to vinyl to make up the revenue gap. There is evidence that interest in new bands is very hard to turn into sales of *hard product*. Increasingly, young people (who most avidly follow new music) don't buy records or CDs at all. And it seems like there are a handful of *blockbuster* releases that sell really well, and below that a huge array of thousands of sub genres and bands with a small following and some local fans. Most of these bands would have been able to sell one thousand 7"s ten or more years ago, by touring, trading, and selling to distributors. One thousand seems like a million today in terms of selling records at shows or distributors, unless your band has some great deal of hype. This means pressing quantities of 300 or 500 and those sold mostly locally or directly to a small group of fans of a particular subgenre online or through a few specialized distributors.

The people who do still buy *hard product* are die hard fans and collectors. And these are the target for vinyl reissues. This is not a punk phenomenon; the whole music industry is doing vinyl reissues. It bothers some people that many of these reissues are *deluxe*, which usually just seems like an excuse to jack up the price to CD profit margins or greater. Does the world need a 220 gram vinyl, gatefold, remastered edition of a 7" that originally was recorded on a 4-track and packaged in a xerox sleeve? That said, if you have a distro or record store, there are finally a lot of good records available for you to stock. Material that, a few years ago, you thought would never be in print again, is back on vinyl. The only real downside is that so much of it is very limited or expensive. I would say renewed interest in early punk and hardcore is part of the picture, but you could argue that this interest never went away. For certain the ease of file sharing has allowed tons of people to be exposed to bands that were marginal or long forgotten and increased demand for reissues. I would also note that *bootleg pressure* might force more labels and bands to make a move on reissues as tons of classic titles get bootlegged every year, often titles that labels have been trying to license for many years to no avail.

I wrote a column in the past about how bands whose catalog stayed in print for many years enjoyed a residual popularity far in excess of bands from the same period whose material was in and out of print quickly. This seems painfully obvious, but if you are around the hardcore scene for twenty years it seems strange the bands that are popular versus those who remain little known. Will another year go by in which one of my personal favorites, NOTA remains out of print, but Zoogz Rift and Tom Troccoli's Dog are still in the SST catalog? Sarcasm aside, if you are a record label having a solid back catalog of classic titles can be a big boost to help underwrite new releases. This was the way most labels operated, and indeed still the way many major labels operate to this day. Most of the profit is in back catalog like AC/DC records that are all paid for and sell continually with little or no promotion or expenses. This can be the same story for DIY labels, keeping a classic title in print means that stores order more copies every time they order because they know it will always sell. Most labels these days tend to focus on a very quick turnaround, selling 300-500 copies of a record in a few months, if not days. I would argue that the bands and the label might be better served by keeping records available over the long term at a reasonable price. That might not make sense for "flavor of the month" bands or labels, but if a record is good and you have faith in it, you should keep it available as long as there is demand for it. In fact a good test of how good a record is is its ability to sell if you take away the hype of a limited edition. A lot of reissues from just a few years ago were so limited that they are already fetching collector prices or have already become very hard to find. It would be a big boost to labels and distros to keep stuff like this in print over the long term.

When I look through my record collection, I am always amazed at how many outstanding records are still *not* reissued. At a time when it seems like every barrel has been scraped, and really marginal bands are getting full discographies, a closer look at the shelves proves otherwise. What is the hold-up? In most cases it's the indifference or intransigence of the intellectual property owners of the out print material. Bands and labels that are many years removed from hardcore who insist on either astronomical amounts of money for licensing their catalog, or have progressed as musicians and are embarrassed by their youthful efforts. Hundreds of killer records are tied up in disputes over who owns the rights. Not many people in the early days of hardcore were thinking about who would own the title to their music on formats that didn't even exist yet when they cut a 7" in the 1980s. And now attitudes among ex-band members range from not caring at all about the old material, to thinking they will able to quit their day jobs off the royalties from a reissue and few reunion gigs. As a result, labels that are looking for titles to re-press often have to work with what is available, not what bands they think are the best.

Over the past few years I have very aggressively pursued some of my personal favorite bands about reissuing some of my favorite records. I've only been successful in a few cases. I have offered money and put my reputation on the line, only to be told the bands weren't interested, see the releases go to other labels, or hear that "the back catalog will be remastered and reissued soon" which it still isn't years later. I would say to labels, though, keep asking and trying to track down old bands you like because sometimes it will pay off. The toughest customers are bands who lost the rights to their material to bigger labels that are still around. These are the kind of labels that need to be pressured into doing reissues or licensing their catalog. If CD sales don't do it, the fear of bootlegs might. Either way, a nicely done reissue is a win/win for bands, labels, stores, and distributors. I started to make a list of killer records I thought deserved a reissue for this column, but since I was chastised for last months lengthy column, I will let you use your imagination.



1. Behind the Schemes at the Museum.

April has bust through the seams and alla sudden work is a warzone, silent strikes (Union members won't tell me what's happening and I couldn't join if I wanted to: no contract, no rights). Management bargaining postures are as subtle as King Jong-Il, I'm trying to show solidarity for struggles that aren't mine, but the only mind in which I'd be a scab, as a temp, for covering shifts left empty due to strikes, is my own, and I'm pretty sure it's the temps they're cutting out anyway. Gah. Some say cover your own ass and the rest will follow, but signing new contracts that rob all of any unauthorized toilet breaks ("Please sir, can I take a piss?") and forbid talking with other staff unless "brief and/or

work-related" may be one step too far. Bear in mind as a lowest-rung "visitor host" in a kinduvuabigdeal museum, this means literally standing in a room by yourself for eight to ten hours. Take away my aimless chats with co-workers and you take away my humanity and soon my sanity. I hid a scrawled "fuck you" in an unusually elaborate signature and signed it anyway. Comedically self-defeating strategy, that and talking all the louder on shift—insolence as a form of rebellion, I notice myself slowly getting slacker as shining examples are ignored and the tiniest discrepancies of my colleagues are seized upon. Phil's got a bad leg, used up all his sick days, management are onto him, he says, sure of it, croaks when he's worried, and from today he must ask a supervisor a third his age for permission to limp to the loo. Angie's been there fifteen years, the place is her whole life, she's got a grip on that radio like you wouldn't believe (received, over) more than just a last straw for her. Something about struggles assuming new forms. These are our weird new quiet battles, the frontline's been effaced with some corporate-sponsored street art, and the factory has glass doors and award-winning architecture. Culture mercenaries working flextime and wondering idly about tax rebates. Motivation hits the floor and the gap between what they're told and what they know becomes too big to jump.

2. NHS—Neat Hospital Shit.

This month I endured general anesthetic for the first time. It was a routine procedure administered one hundred percent free, gratis, and for nothing on the NHS—that last, bustling but loveable vestige of a British socialist backbone that has long since succumbed to early-onset neo-liberal crumbling. It is still the largest employer in Europe, I was born and (god willing if it's still here then) will die in its hospitals, and the National Health Service is the indirect benefactor of my life having also paid my dad to dispense what is admittedly, these last few years, a bulging mountain of daily methadone scripts as a "community chemist" in our native South Wales for his entire pharmaceutical career. Aneurin Bevan, the creator of the reforms that saw the introduction of this national free-for-everyone framework, was also, incidentally, a lovely Welsh man with a valleys lilt. One of the first things I was handed on my resurfacing into the world, by the kindly nurse, along with a biscuit and some juice, was a newspaper, which detailed news of Obama's healthcare reforms. The circumstances and real arguments are beyond my knowledge but the bizarre cell-based judgments handed out to Americans who for whatever reason get ill, then can't afford their treatment made me stop feeling sorry for myself sharpish, sitting as I was in my free bed with my free juice and my new, polyp-free sinuses.

3. Four good songs for spring.

Anyway, since all I've been doing is popping codeine (all prescription drugs are also free regardless of who you are if you live in Wales, thanks devolved left-leaning government—or free if you live in England and can prove you're poor enough, which isn't hard right now…) I've been listening to songs over and over again and proselytizing weirdly, as you'll see. Cram this mini-mix hypothetically into your ear holes for Easter and beg for mercy… Jesus is dead and the pope, says the papers, is some manner of pedo, so let's party.

Lack of Knowledge—"Danger to Life"

I downloaded this LP by accident, late pass on a lot of this Crass Records stuff that isn't Crass, the most, most pleasurable surprise. Androids of Mu! Honey Bane! And the best thing is you're not unlikely to come across some of these records in most of the more neglected charity shops around London (American friends perhaps you call this *thrifting*, you're gross). Anyway, Lack of Knowledge are an interesting group. Pretty much everything that it had always bugged me that was kind of lacking from Joy Division is distilled into these detailed intelligent tunes (in the good way, not the feels-like-it-needs-to-explain-itself-separately way) They have those styled buzz-*and*-howl bass lines, a bit of new-wavey stomp to them and lots of pointed lyrics about girls working in factories, mountains of black bags, diatribes reminiscent of Crisis with A-levels. It sounds like urban trauma and grey faces, weird guitar twinkle that puts you all off kilter, then expanding into awesome sudden upbeat climax in the way that does sure remind of that Ian Curtis in his more open-mouthed seizure songs, but like I said… better. This tune starts with a fucking air raid siren, don't tell me it's not perfect.

Neon Blud—"Sophomore Blud"

Now I'm not being funny but this band sounds like fucking No Trend with a teenage girl singer, caught me absolutely by surprise (was expecting more "whoa dudes, aren't we like, so unsettling and deranged and shit, bro?" and all that cheaply executed novice pedal-pushing post-first-Cult-Ritual-demo impersonal impersonator steeze) but the whole of the *Whipps* cassette is so lucid and on point, colorful and noisy as shit in a considered way, this could be Born Against for the first twenty seconds, until the vocalist kicks, quite literally, in, and it could be The Wrecks or Nog Watt. I'd kill for a physical copy of the tape, so smack my thigh and call me a hypocrite but this is just incredibly good quality, contemporary, awesome.

Non-Band—"Duncan Dancin'"

I don't know that much about this all-girl band beyond that it was the stand-out track on a mix, released in 1982, that I got, but the shouty Japanese vocals literally sound like the baby voice I use to talk to animals (lots of plosives and *eee*-ing) which makes it great. Post punk, bass and sax, and lots of space. Brilliant bedroom dancing, which I *will* now be able to actually do without fear. Yes, the man who the crazy lady that I live with has chosen to move in is doing so as I type this, he shares an adjoining wall with a set of double doors set into it with me that I have "sound proofed" (badly) because I was warned he was doing a doctorate and would *not* appreciate my *noise*. However, upon making the gent a cup of tea, he revealed he used to play sax. As aforementioned loonette is a jazz-obsessive, I assumed that was his passion too, so imagine my joy and relief (I don't get jazz really, I pretend when necessary though) when he said, "Er, more, like, punk sax really, making noises here and there, problem is you can't get too excited or nothing comes out." Maybe that's what happened with Non-band, the sparseness was hyperventilation! Joy of joys though, looks like I can un-staple the duvet from the door. On further pressing, he used to hang out on the Kings Road, frequent Legends, wear bondage gear from Sex and his best mate went out with Billy Idol. I embarrassed myself with how excited I got. I have a new ally!

Hygiene—"Organic Shopper"

I've been getting massively paranoid that the music part of this column is sort of redundant cos hasn't everyone heard everything these days? So, to balance the books, here is Hygiene—we put a record out by them and it's so brilliant but I'm scared to say so to people for fear it's one of those occasions where one is subject to deflected humility when you release something like to avoid sounding like a weak sales pitch/self-aggrandizement. Fuck it, this band is way, way ahead of most others in this vein (there are few, I think the Human Race are also great though—http://www.myspace.com/thehumanRACE) in the UK—I want to show some love to Hygiene because, let's be honest here, I've been too scared to interview them for the longest time due to the fact that their individual specialist subjects are so wide and deep in range that I'd need a particularly scorn-proof kayak to traverse it. One day I will do it and learn everything from how to make value judgments on a good pair of sta-prest to, well, lots of other really quite important things about football and critical theory. Anyway, they are kind of the transatlantic equivalent to Airfix Kits, both in terms of post punk jerkiness and having a singer who has the *wrong* (but so right) accent given the sonic-geography/locational identity of the band. Nat's Canadian but everything else is very not-North American, which is so refreshing in a period where London bands are in love with all those forgettable geometric west coast mindless fuzz-peddlers. Live they're more brooding, coming over like if Mark E. Smith was Jewish and visibly terrified. On the cusp between half-time scrap and premeditated, theoretically validated violence, some kind of pogo chin stroke? The real psycho mafia, cheap pub uppers, crushing grey Sundays. I'm killing it by trying to explain it. Listen to their song about the National Front Tea Party. Sniff glue, not ketamine.

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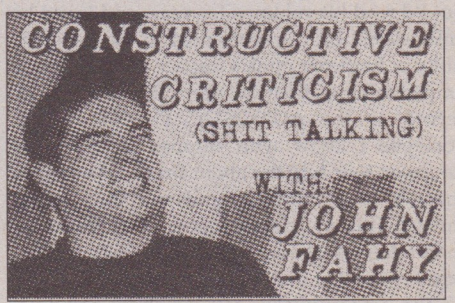

1. THE ONLY COMMANDMENT: Thou

Shalt Not Take The Name Of Straight Edge In Vain.

Looking amid the interesting rebuttals to the DRY ROT interview a few months back—most interesting to me was Mariam's column on the subject of how insidious Christianity is, even when softly tiptoeing through the hardcore underground—I found myself taken curious by one small detail. Seeing pictures of the band X'ed up while playing rubs me the wrong way. I don't think straight edge can truly be claimed by anyone who admits to being of the Christian persuasion (while we're at it, the Krishna persuasion too. Morons.), what could possibly be a bigger crutch than Christian faith? Straight edge is about thinking for yourself, not letting your pervert pastor or weiner-ish youth group sculpt your ideas. Of course, some of the douchier aspects of straight edge hardcore would be at home with looking down on the fuckups among us that like to get shitty and slobber about now and again, and that is certainly why Christians would gravitate toward that kind of crowd—they're judgmental dickheads too. But those douchy sxe-ers are *our* knuckleheads, not *yours*. Any of you Christians can look down at us in mainstream society every day; do you have to pollute these waters too? Scripture and dogma are the antithesis of the original straight edge idea. Just another way to describe the utter insanity of "Christian Hardcore."

I'm not up for the idea of "easy targets" when it comes to this subject. It's easy to let this kind of thing slide by because people think, "Aw, well, they're getting a lot of shit already." If you're going to permeate this culture with ideas that are antithetical to it, you're going to get some blowback. It's not enraging, just disappointing. People involved with this underground have had the chance to see beyond such a narrow mentality, so when they don't, it's a fucking bummer. It's like reading Nate Gloom's interview with Jason O'Toole from LIFE'S BLOOD in which Jason talks about "criminal scum" he arrests now as a sheriff in Texas.

I'm glad that *MRR* took this discussion on. I think in years past, the very fact that the band is Christian would have sidelined them immediately. I've never heard DRY ROT, although maybe I should based on how many top tens I was surprised to see them pop up in these pages previously. I just hope that having a discussion about religion in hardcore doesn't mean we stop calling out the total hypocrisy of it.

2. I was truly saddened to hear about Bruce Roehrs's death. I never knew Bruce personally, but I'd read his columns for years and loved his enthusiasm. Bruce represented to me the continuity of hardcore punk's impact. He'd be just as amped talking about the new NEVER HEALED record as the AGNOSTIC FRONT reissue. Someone I know who stopped by the *MRR* house on tour told me about Bruce encouraging them to stop sitting around and start getting mental. This was classic to me, a retirement age man telling a 21-year-old that he wasn't being punk enough at that exact moment.

The continuity I'm talking about is a large part of why *MRR* is important to me. Tim Yo was a straight up motherfucker to some people—he never hesitated to be an asshole if he thought he was right, even while dying of cancer. Mykel Board is 60 fucking years old and still probably won't back down from his argument that NAMBLA activists are brave souls. Weirdos are weirdos, regardless of age. I've been reading this magazine for exactly half of my life and it's still a really big deal to me, especially now that I'm a small part of it. I've learned a lot from these pages, and not just about music. While there's something to be said for younger people getting involved with the magazine to keep it fresh, I'm still just as eager to hear what the older crowd has to say.

MRR has been buoyed by a few generations now, and I would like to see younger kids getting involved with it more often because *Maximum Rocknroll is* punk centralized. The library alone is a reason to send in any record or demo you or your band release. The idea of this magazine is a simple one, punks making a monthly magazine for other punks, but the task is huge and the impact *MRR* has had over the years is just as large. The "Major Label Issue" in 1994 was massively impactful, and I think the "Business of Punk" issues five or six years back were just as important. Columnists like Ben Weasel, Chris Bickel, Mykel Board, and Sam McPheeters are some of the most entertaining punk writers ever, in my opinion.

As for now, I would not dream of missing the demo reviews *MRR* does every month. I've gotten into some great bands at their outset that I probably would not have heard of without the demo section. I think there's an earnest, enthusiastic approach from the reviewers that get the excited potential of a new band's demo. I think the zine reviews have gotten better since the creation of the internet because hopefully now the shittier writers will blog first before stapling. Bryony Beynon's guest columns have been excellent and I hope she is in every issue soon. Brace Belden is a pain in the ass and a great, entertaining writer. There are a million reasons I can't fathom punks not reading this magazine aside from the realization that kids now grow up on the fucking internet. I hope that this magazine can integrate with the internet in a way that doesn't submit to the temporary, transitional, poseur-haven of the cyberworld. As of now, that is what sets apart *MRR* from Viva La Vinyl—real punks doing real work for the long term, and twatty cubicle jockeys that flip CULT RITUAL records to buy some fourthmeal.

While on the subject of continuity and punk institutions, I have to talk about two of my favorite people. Firstly, Josh Jubinsky is the drummer for VICIOUS FISHES and CIVILIZATION. He runs Dead Tank Records, and possibly most importantly, works at the Jacksonville library. Josh had me and Joe "Legs Up" Lachut up for a zine reading/discussion panel a few weeks ago (really he just had Joe up, I ended up reading because some other guy bailed) and we got to see what Josh is doing first-hand up there. Josh mainly works in the children's department, where he's started giving kids guitar lessons. Aside from this, he's helped to push for the Jacksonville library to include a zine section. The zine section is growing constantly and covers all topics. Anyone reading this who self-publishes should send Josh a copy of whatever you're doing for the library. There, your dirty little rag will be bar-coded and kept for posterity. As of now, the zine section is the third largest in any US public library. Look Josh up at the egotistical www.joshjubinsky.com

Secondly, my friend Fil is five issues deep into his *Heartattack*-inspired *Give Me Back* zine. This magazine has a lot of potential, and is still distributed through Ebullition Records for very cheap. The release of issues has stunted a bit recently due to lack of contributions. Anyone throughout the US should be getting involved with *GMB*, but I'd especially like to see more east coast coverage now that the zine is based in DC. *GMB* have some excellent interviews (PYGMY LUSH was a recent favorite) and often very entertaining record reviews. I think they'd like to expand with some atypical features, so anyone who has some ideas should get in touch. Fil or Katy can be contacted at givemebackzine@hotmail.com

ENDNOTES:

1. NEON BLUD have released a killer live tape of their off-kilter yet incessantly catchy weirdo-punk on West Palm Beotch Records—if it's sold out, you can at least hear it here: www.westpalmbeotch.blogspot.com. The band is also releasing their *Whipps* demo on 7" soon on Fan Death, if it's not out already by print; www.myspace.com/fandeathrecords
2. By print, my main shitstain Joe will have his newest issue of *Seven Inches To Freedom* out, send him a buck for one and send him shit to review! PO Box 457, Ft. Myers, FL 33902.
3. I've been getting some great tunes via demos and mixtapes in the mail and inbox, keep them coming!

John Fahy/15011 Lakeside View Dr./Apt 2402/Fort Myers/FL/33919 or fahy_john@hotmail.com

4. May 7, 8, and 9 will be 305 Fest in Miami this year, stay tuned for the results of that. Looking forward to LIBYANS, FOREIGN OBJECTS, MEHKAGO N.T. and a lot more…
5. Stay tuned for a large music update next issue. I'm way behind on reviewing some killer new music. Tapes, tapes, tapes, records.

Sources

In Boston, I always had rules for my addictions. I never did drugs during the day, unless I was still up from the night before. Every week I

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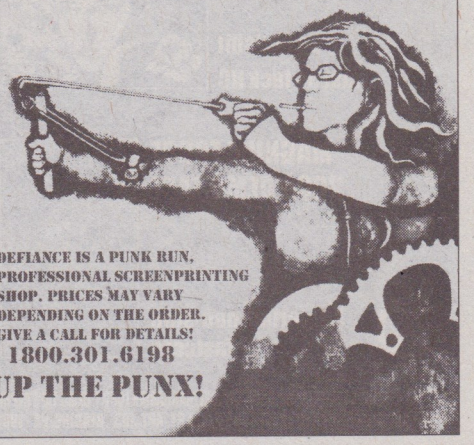

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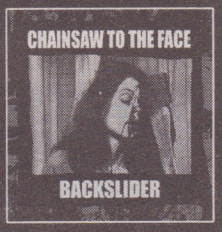

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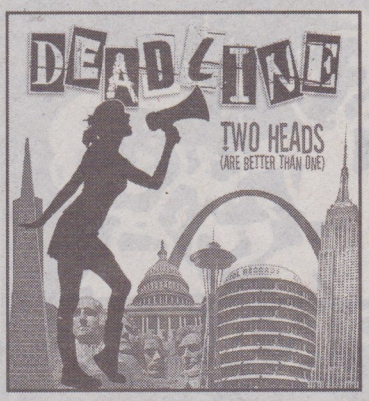

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would stop for several days and everything would get much, much worse unless we went out for cocktails, yes, please, cocktails. Sometimes I would stop everything for a week, or even a month, just to make sure I could do it, and everyone around me would be stunned and JoAnne would call me on the phone and say: you know you're an addict, right?

You can move to Boston, I said—we could get an apartment together, you'd be away from all your sources. But JoAnne said: you don't want to see me this way. She moved back in with her mother, in the Seattle suburb where she grew up, a town getting richer and leaving all the earlier inhabitants behind, the ones who were just middle class. Her mother wouldn't let her leave the house because she was worried she would get drugs, that was one of the rules for JoAnne staying there so I went to the health food store in Boston and borrowed the largest size containers of all the fanciest vitamins and sent them to JoAnne, along with a 36-ounce bottle of Bragg's liquid amino acids. Her mother remembered that later: JoAnne really appreciated those vitamins, she said—she talked about you all the time.

But first, JoAnne's mother kicked her out, after JoAnne left the house and went to Seattle for the day. Soon JoAnne was back in San Francisco—Melissa was doing outreach on Capp Street when she ran into her. Melissa said: JoAnne doesn't look good. What does she look like, I asked. She's lost a lot of weight and you can almost see through her skin, Melissa said. JoAnne called me to tell me about running into Vanessa on the street, JoAnne was spare-changing and Vanessa wouldn't give her any money but she told her she looked great, she might've even said amazing.

JoAnne was so angry—Vanessa had never complimented her in that way before, it was because of all the weight she'd lost. But I don't like where all this is leading—I want to tell you about the time JoAnne finally came to Boston, after Gabby and I had moved into our own place, we had a three bedroom to ourselves. JoAnne loved the list I had tacked up on the wall in the living room, actually it was all of my daily lists taped together, maybe a month of them—various colors of scrap paper with tricks' names and numbers; grocery lists; and then certain things written over and over again like *incest*, because I was getting ready to confront my parents. Sometimes JoAnne and I would stand in the living room and look at the lists—there wasn't any furniture in there, and we didn't like looking outside at the kids leaving the school across the street—JoAnne would look at me like a professor, purse her lips and ask in an exaggerated parody of a British accent: children, what are we going to talk about today? Then she'd wind her hand around in the circle with her pointer finger out like she was getting ready to read, Boston style, and boom the finger would land right on *incest*. That's right, Professor JoAnne would say—incest. Repeat after me: incest. Spell that—*i...n...c...e...s...t...* Exactly—now, go home and tell your parents.

Or, when Andee and I went to that party in New York—it was a birthday party for Gregory, this boy who I had a crush on for at least a year, I mean we were friends and there was all this sexual tension but I knew he was never going to sleep with me because I was a whore. That happened a lot in New York, not the crushes but the part where they wouldn't sleep with me once they found out what I did for a living. Anyway, that night I was in an after-trick spending mood, so on the way to Gregory's house I thought I'd buy him a dozen roses, half yellow and half peach, but the person at the flower stand got confused and mixed two dozen together—oh well, I thought, I guess I'll give him two dozen. Globalization was hard at work providing roses for scarily cheap prices to East Village consumers like me. When we got to the party, I was embarrassed because Gregory's boyfriend had brought flowers too, but only three Gerbera daisies. This was the party where, at one point, Gregory and three other fags were comparing Nikes—they were all wearing the same ones, and I said something like: that's enough to fund an entire sweatshop. Then one of them looked down at my boots, and said: well, you're wearing a whole cow on your feet. I want to tell you about how JoAnne jumped in and said: these boots are vegan! Then, on the way out, she somehow managed to stuff all the roses into her bag without anyone noticing, I should've bought them for her in the first place.

That was around the same time when my roommate's brother started staying in our apartment—we shared this enormous commercial loft space so there was plenty of room, but it was still kind of annoying the way Devon's brother literally pitched a tent in the middle of our apartment, and then he would bring home women to fuck and there weren't any walls and they would make all this ridiculously gendered hetero noise. I want to tell you about how JoAnne decided that if my roommate's brother had moved in without asking, she could move in too, so she got a bigger tent, and pitched it right next to my roommate's brother's tent, and then when he and some new fling were fucking she started screaming along with them. Later things got messier, after the landlord broke in and stole everything, but at least we didn't have to listen to my roommate's brother. But back to Boston, Gabby and I were selling K to save money so that we could take the train cross-country and figure out where the hell to move—we needed to get out of Boston, that was for sure. But then, instead of saving money, Gabby ended up doing more drugs, and I want to tell you about how JoAnne ended up going with me, I want to tell you about all our adventures when we traveled cross-country on the train together, but I can't because JoAnne was already dead and I was moving back to San Francisco.

When JoAnne died, it was important to all of us to say that she didn't die of an overdose. She died because the hospital refused her healthcare. She was kicking heroin and they hooked her up to an IV for two days but then said you need to leave. She had active TB and a bladder infection. They gave her Tylenol. She couldn't walk, her roommates carried her home. Later that night, they found her in the backyard, naked in the grass and laughing. The next day she was dead.

I don't know why it mattered so much for us to say that she didn't die of an overdose. Either way, the hospital had killed her. JoAnne never made it to visit me in Boston, where I was still living; New York would come several years down the line. I'd just confronted my parents and it was awful, I thought I'd feel some kind of release but I guess I felt all the release I would get while preparing a fifteen-page document saying what I remembered and what it had done to me and how I was healing, and that I wouldn't talk to my father ever again unless he could come to terms with it. And then I sent that document to my four grandparents and my sister, Express Mail so they would get it at the same time as when I confronted my parents. I planned all this so that my father couldn't twist everything around, everything I wanted to say was in that document. I knew he wouldn't let me speak so I handed him the envelope first and said I know that you sexually abused me that you raped me that you molested me and right then he started screaming; he told me I was psychotic. We were in a public park and I walked away, away from my father's screaming I was worried he was going to come after me and when I looked up at the buildings for a minute I couldn't figure out where I was. Then I was stuck in Boston with nothing really except Gabby and drugs, and I was trying not to do drugs.

The writing in this column is an excerpt from some crazy memoirish thing I'm working on called The End of San Francisco. *My most recent book is a novel,* So Many Ways to Sleep Badly. *I'm also turning lostmissing, my public art project, into some kind of book-type thing, yay for more books! And I recently finished a new anthology called* Why Are Faggots So Afraid of Faggots? *I know you're wondering the same thing. Now I'm just waiting for someone to publish it. You can communicate with me via www.mattildabernsteinsycamore.com, which includes past* MRR *columns. Or you can write to me at 537 Jones Street, #3152, San Francisco, CA 94102.*

My column went in last month only a couple days before I heard the bad news about Bruce Roehrs. I never knew the guy, or even had a chance to meet him, but anyone with as much time for *Victim In Pain* as he had must have been a solid gent, and the quality of the people vouching for him only really reinforces that. A bit of a bittersweet honor that the last record he ever talked about in his column was one that I recorded (the Battle Ruins 7"). Hope you liked the drum sound, Bruce. I don't drink, but I had a Coca-Cola in your honor when I heard. RIP.

Endless repetition in the recording and mixing parts of my life this month, except this weekend when I walked over to find our space padlocked. *Always* remember to pay your rent. In my endless pursuit of the perfect drum sound I maybe learned a couple things:

1) Don't let me get carried away with the bass drum. As I sat doing the final mixdown for a record that was to be mastered in a couple days, I suddenly realized that I had the bass drum annihilating the rest of the mix. So much depth and bass were causing it to either sit too far above the rest of the stuff, squishing it down, or when mixed lower, causing it to be too murky. After consulting with a friend, the suggested thing to do was to back off the 200-500 Hz frequencies on the kick drum mics, which proved to be immensely helpful. In fact it opened up the rest of the mix so much that I ended up having to retool some other things which now felt a little bit different without this giant kick drum towering over everything. Eventually I still had my powerful thunking kick drum sound but with a bit more clarity and room for the rest of the mix to shine through. Happy ending right? Good enough anyway.

2) Room mics and drums, "do the math." Pulled this out of ye olde bi-monthly issue of *Tape-Op* magazine, but I think it's good enough to warrant reiterating. The article was actually called "Stop the Cymbal Splash, or 'How do I get big drum sounds in my house?'" by Chas Ferry with Marcos Lopez Iglesias. If you can grab a copy, or if you have one and haven't read it, it's probably one of the better guides I've caught in any recent issue, and I like the whole "in my house" angle. Very "Basement Screams" oriented. Within it there's a section that goes through some scenarios about setting up room mics for your drum kit, and one of the dudes talks about how he was used to setting up mics in the back corners of a room, fifteen feet from the drum kit, but given that he was now recording at home he didn't have that option. He went on to say that he noticed placing his room mics only two feet from the kit in his house seemed to get almost as much room depth, and after checking some outside sources he came to learn that... here's the important part... the key to how big a room sounds on your recording is not the distance of the mics to the drums, but the ratio of the distance from the drums divided by the distance from the walls. Write that down, reader, it's news you can use (if you're recording a drum set). In this gentleman's case, the mics that were fifteen feet from the drums, were thirty feet from the walls in the first scenario, and in the second, they were four feet from the walls, while being two feet from the drums. In other words they were basically the same two-to-one ratio, and so while there still were some differences in the overall depth of sound, he still had a similar balanced room sound. A good thing to know, and really it wasn't the only bit of useful info in there.

I've done a few live band recordings in the past month and really can't emphasize enough how important it is to convince the people playing music to keep their volumes relatively low if you're in a small room. Otherwise everything is just a total mess. Bass coming out of an 8x10" speaker cab with the low frequencies pumped way up in a room that's ten feet by fifteen feet is going to be a really problem when you're trying to get an even sound in the room mics, or when trying to keep the sound inside the bass drum isolated. Same story for guitar. A lot of times you can get just as good of a sound with a smaller speaker cabinet with only one speaker in it and with the volume a little bit lower on the amp. If the sound of the band really mixing together in one room is essential, try to find somewhere (like a house) where you can set the band up in separate rooms that are connected by a hallway/corridor or something where they are reasonably isolated, but where you can maybe have the room mics between the rooms blending everything together a bit. I had this worked out to decent results in early March, and while I haven't quite worked out a system for it yet, I'm pleased with my initial results. The more speed and density your music takes on, the tougher it can be to achieve a feeling of clarity and having mixable results later on that don't sound weird. It's important to remember no matter how impatient the band is to rage out and shred their gear, you've gotta stay patient. If they get antsy just remind them it's gonna be better if you do this the hard way than the quick way, and if that doesn't work say something like "official studio engineer business you wouldn't understand." I've never tried that last one yet, but I'm saving it.

I'm twenty-seven and I just learned to play a power chord. Seems like a small victory, but for me this is an epic and long-awaited day. I've wanted to play guitar for half of my life, but it never happened. Most of the reasons are sad, stupid, or both.

When I was twelve I wanted an electric guitar so I could be like Courtney Love or Kim Deal. Predictably, my parents thought that was a little masculine and bought me a second-hand hippy acoustic with a swirly earth mother inlay and a complimentary Grateful Dead bears strap. I used my birthday money to pay for lessons. I went in thinking I was going to make the best of my acoustic-y lameness and learn anyway. I might have if my teacher hadn't kept leaning in and telling me my hair smelled nice, and that I should really try out singing, or bass, and that I should know that already, because I seemed really mature for my age. I stopped going even though I couldn't get my money back. Instead of dutifully learning my chords, as I had envisioned, I sat on the porch and haphazardly strummed. Since no one ever told me how to tune it, it was usually the weirdest, sourest set of notes a human being has ever made. But I still tried to make it work. My second boyfriend borrowed my sad little out of tune hippy guitar in the guise of tuning it for me and never gave it back.

My high school boyfriend taught me how to play bass so we could be in a band together, and while he played guitar, I watched with a furtive jealously. He didn't mean to sound like an asshole when he said, "You should try bass, it's easy, and it makes girls look all cute and small." He was just trying to find something he thought was more at "my level." I hated it, but I still believed there was something I didn't know about musical skill. We broke up when I went to college. He thought I was being brainwashed by the lesbian feminist agenda. He referred to college as *Temptation Island* like the hit reality show of the time (hello, the year 2000!), but that's another column about dating punk boys who in the end are more jockish and conventional than first impressions would have you believe.

After our unhealthy teenage (on my part) romance fizzled, I thought about trying again with guitar. I was feeling empowered and free now after all. A lady "friend" who played told me not to bother. "You should have started years ago, or just be naturally good at it. And you didn't and you're not." It crushed me to get that from another lady, and I lost the heart to try. I was nineteen.

Why I listened, why I believed other people had some secret knowledge of what I was capable of is unfathomable to me now. I can give myself a little slack in retrospect though. Learning an instrument is kind of a luxury, it takes money and time. If someone you trust, who you think knows more about something that you do, tells you with an air of authority that you can't be good at it, why would you spend the time or the money?

What I didn't know then could fill volumes, but saddest of all is that I didn't know that no one could tell me, with any certainty at all, what I could do. Anyone is capable of anything; all it takes is time, determination, and access. I'd like to think that if I'd known that, I would have been playing all along. But that was then, and who cares, because I know it now.

I may have also bowed to internal pressures telling me I wasn't allowed to be a mediocre lady musician. I didn't want take something on as a representation of ladies everywhere and suck at it. I felt like all those dudes who want to see girls fail would have somebody to point to. I was afraid of making them seem right. With what seemed like so few women in punk bands for such a long time, it really felt like you had a lot of weight to carry, to prove that you could be just as good as boys if not better.

And that is where the gender fuck of society won. I never learned for fear of sexist judgment. But now I know it's more important that I just get up there and do it, if I suck or not. I've got to be brave. Because it isn't for the jerks, it's in spite of them. I can be terrible for a while before I get better, and that doesn't mean anything. I have to credit the rise in numbers of ladies in bands and the post-riot girl band culture for this. I also have

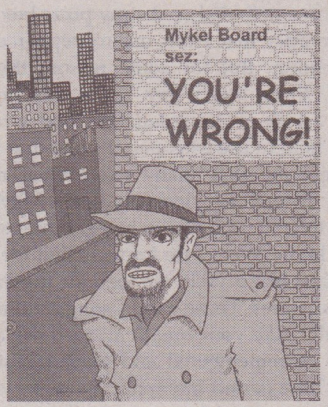
to thank my band members of the last five years; each of them play guitar, and each have told me I should pick it up, that it would be really fun for me. Particularly to Dan who loaned me his pedal, and Paul who loaned me his guitar. Also, the Bay Area Girls Rock Camp and Ladies Rock Camp for providing a hefty dose of inspiration.

Yeah, I just learned to play a power chord and I am already the guitar player in a band. There's punk for you. It is never to late learn an instrument, start a band, to let out the songs that are bouncing around inside you (it's never too early either!).

And, no one in the world can know what you are capable of; you decide that. You decide what you want to set your heart on, spend your time on. That really is all it takes: determination, access, and time.

Send all details of how you are gonna do what you've always wanted to do: arielawesome@gmail.com

What, you need more inspiration? Someone cooler than me? All right then: Debbie Harry didn't start playing in punk bands until she was 27. Also, check out the radness of these girls and ladies: www.bayareagirlsrockcamp.org



The purpose of having boundaries is to protect and take care of ourselves. We need to be able to tell other people when they are acting in ways that are not acceptable to us. A first step is starting to know that we have a right to protect and defend ourselves. That we have not only the right, but the duty to take responsibility for how we allow others to treat us. —Robert Burney

I never met a fence I didn't want to climb over, nor a border I didn't want to sneak across. —Mykel Board

I've told this anecdote before. The year is 1970. I'm at Big Sur in California. It's the College-Summer-Across-America trip. Everybody does it. I'm traveling with my Beloit pals. The car. The acid. The air. Ah, the air.

Big Sur freedom. Like a Kerouac novel. It smells like grass, growing grass, not mowed lawn grass. Each blade sings as the air whips by. Open spaces. I run here and there… absolutely free. A Zen slap to my acid-addled consciousness.

I walk away from the others. A straight line. Knee-high shrubbery. Looking out for miles over the Pacific. It's a view you can jerk off to. I do. Then, I walk some more. Something catches my pant leg. I reach down.

Jeezuz fuck! It's barbed wire. About seven foot by seven foot. A fenced-in patch of land. Here! In the freest place in America… a fence! About three feet high, rusted, it's not much of a fence, but still, it's a fence.

The Great Wall of China didn't stop Genghis Khan. He couldn't go over it, so he went around it. Ptuuuiii, Great Wall, my ass!

So three feet of barbed wire? Hah! I can almost step over it. Climb it. I do, wondering what it could be protecting. I search. Figuring it's a pot patch or buried loot. I can't find a thing. I don't get it.

Fuck it. Anyone who fences-in freedom deserves to be shat upon. That's what I do. Take a shit. A fierce beer shit. A stinking pile in the midst of the barbed-wire corral. Grabbing a few leaves from the ground, I wipe my ass and climb back over to the other side.

Soon, I'm back with my friends. We finish the LSD picnic. Have more beer, then head back to San Francisco.

In a few hours, I learn why the fenced in area is fenced-in. It's filled with poison oak. Poison oak?? My ass!

Flash ahead: It's 2010. I'm in the teacher's lounge at work. As is often the case, one of the teachers is laying into me.

"Mykel," she says, "What is it with you? I go to teach this new student. I introduce myself to her and she says, 'Oh, you're Sara. You're the one who lived in Bali.' I never met her and she already knows about my life."

"And?" I ask, "Is there something embarrassing about living in Bali?"

"Of course not," she says, "but my life is *mine*. It's not yours. You just don't respect boundaries! You've got to learn. I am here. You are there. If I want to tell a student about my life, I can. But it's got to be my choice. You don't know where *you* end and other people begin."

I check to see if I have a Siamese twin.

"I mean it, Mykel," she says. "You're not like most people, I know. Still, would you like me telling everyone about your life?"

"Sure," I say.

"Well, most people wouldn't," she says. "You've got to respect boundaries."

Before I can answer, she stalks out of the lounge in a huff.

"Boundaries," I think. "I don't really get this boundary stuff. A few fences are there for a good purpose, like keeping your ass out of the poison oak. But most fences keep your ass in, more than out. It's like Mexican immigration. Fences pretty much suck. "

As I leave the lounge, I pass one of my favorite teachers. One with a perfect ass. Exactly right curvature, the smooth roundness… bulging behind, not to the side. So beautiful she could be Dominican. (How many perfect asses has US immigration law kept out of America? I hate to think about it.)

Passing her, I rest my hands… just briefly… on that gluteal masterpiece.

Whooosh! Pain. An elbow to the chest. I fold, like a Democrat supporting the public option.

"Keep your hands to yourself, Mykel," says the callipygious queen. "Don't you go touching my body without my permission."

I'd like to say I come back with a witty answer, but I can't come back at all. I think she's crushed my sternum.

I don't get it. If I had an ass like that, I'd be running the gauntlet. Touch me, you fools. Look what I got! Yeah! Pretty hot, huh?

Maybe it's an extension of what I wrote about a few columns ago. The iPods, and the iPhones. The plugged ears and turned-off senses. Barbed wire fences, pulled so tight they scratch the skin. I'll build a little wall around myself. *Don't touch me. I'm poison oak!*

Flash to the Silent Club, a Hispanic/anarchist punk club near the border of Queens and Brooklyn: R-Tronika (www.musictronika.com) has played, as well as another Latino band, and a white boy band that I can't remember the name of… but was fuckin' good.

Right now, Taina, one of the R-Tronika singers, is signing my ass. Marking pen, sure to leave a good impression on the guys at the gym. Yeah!

"There it is, Mykel," says Taina. "You sure like to push the envelope, huh?"

Flash to Annie Moore's, the local Irish bar: My weekly Drink Club has been flagging lately. The weather? The economy? This week it's only me and Eiji, a Japanese student. We're discussing how hard it is to meet people in New York and why Drink Club—established to help relieve that isolation—seems like a flop.

"Why don't teachers come to Drink Club?" asks Eiji.

"Last time I asked," I tell him, "they said they spent all day with students and got paid for it. It's a job. They don't want to carry their job outside of working hours."

"Why is that?" he asks. "If they like their job and the students, they should enjoy it any time. If they don't like it, they should quit. I don't understand."

"Boundaries," I tell him. It doesn't help.

Boundaries. Boundaries. Boundaries. It's the current word. Parents are supposed to teach their kids boundaries. Conservatives want them around countries. Liberals want them around (especially women's) bodies. Workers want them around their jobs. This is my job. This isn't. Now I'm at work. Now I'm not.

Me? I will not respect boundaries. If I get elbowed in the chest, I'm going to have to observe them… but I will not *respect* them.

If you're sitting in the corner with your friends, talking about your latest herpes outbreak. I'll be there. Offering you my Lysine.

If you're blithely walking down the street, minding your own business, I'll be there minding your business with you. You cannot talk on your cell phone about your boyfriend without me asking how big his dick is. Your business is *my* business.

If you build a fence, I'll climb over it. I might get an ass-full of poison oak, but I'm still gonna climb. Make it a wall, and I'll break through. If I can't break through, I'll go around.

I don't want to *push the envelope.* I want to puncture it. Tear it apart. I want that envelope to

disintegrate into a hundred scraps. I want to see the paper turned into confetti... shredded around me.

Boundaries? Fuck boundaries. You can sign my ass.

******

A Note on Bruce Roehrs: I don't cry very easily. Those few times I do, it's either legit, like when my mother died, or manipulative, like when I saw *Once Were Warriors.*

For me, a good cry is not cathartic... not at all like a good shit. The last *MRR* cry I had was when Timmy Y died. If you believe in the afterlife (he didn't), I'm sure he's having a good laugh at that one. But crying did not make me feel any better.

I didn't cry when I heard Bruce died. But I felt like shit. We are (were?) about the same age. Both *MRR* vets. We'd only met a few times over the years. The first was when Timmy introduced us sometime last century. On my rare visits to the left coast, we saw each other at the *MRR* house.

Bruce was jolly. Always in good spirits. Always talking about this band or this show or this music. He didn't care if the *MRR* orthodoxy was to hate Agnostic Front... He didn't care about orthodoxy at all. His life was ruled by music, not politics. Obama? Rush Limbaugh? Dominican ass? What excited Bruce?

Fuck! A blistering slab of hardcore appeared at MRR *the other day! This fucking record devastates everything in its path.*

So much energy. So much enthusiasm. So much life. He was the kind of guy that *nobody* hates. He was a spark. A breath of punk air. I didn't cry, but I will fuckin' miss him.

ENDNOTES: email subscribers (god@mykelboard.com) or website viewers (www.mykelboard.com) will get live links and a chance to post comments on the column.

—>*Politically Correct dept:* Bambi adviser Rahm Emanuel apologized to the Special Olympics Committee for using the word "retarded" when he criticized activists who were pushing for true healthcare reform, not the lame law that actually passed. Of course, without real healthcare, the retards will probably have no chance to improve their lives... but it's the apology that counts, right?

—>*Small Victo*ries dept: At first, YouTube censored the videos of Amy Greenfield. The National Coalition Against Censorship and the Electronic Frontier Foundation protested. The videos are rather tame. A naked girl rolling in the mud, mostly. But in today's atmosphere, you need to wear a raincoat in the shower. After the protest, YouTube undid the censorship... sort of. If you want to watch to the videos, you'll be met with the following warning:

"'CTS_Element by artist Amy Greenfield' This video or group may contain content that is inappropriate for some users, as flagged by YouTube's user community. To view this video or group, please verify you are 18 or older by signing in or signing up."

So is it a victory? Yeah, it's a small one. Like the healthcare bill.

—>*Fee this baby! dept:* As if airlines, phone and cable companies didn't have enough fees and surcharges, Continental Airlines is charging extra to be tall! Yep, those "premium seats" in the exit rows. You know, the ones with legroom. They now cost up to $59 extra. Ah, the joys of being short!

—>*Obama at the pulpit dept: A* presidential advisory council, filled with priests and rabbis, is scheduled to offer recommendations on the "faith-based" initiative and other issues. Americans United for Separation of Church and State said, however, that the Obama administration needs to take action, not spend time studying reports.

"I am deeply disappointed at President Obama's handling of the faith-based initiative," said the Rev. Barry W. Lynn, Americans United executive director. "He has kept the harmful Bush-era policies in place and added a constitutionally inappropriate council of religious leaders to offer policy advice. This is not separation of church and state."

My feelings are summed up in this quote from *The Nation*: "Audacity fits nothing on the list of [Obama's] last year's activity save the suggestion that this is the administration the candidate had promised."

—>*I've been saying it's a disease for years dept*: Now the American Medical Association is considering a resolution in support of *banning neckties* in hospitals. According to allbusiness.com, studies show that neckties harbor bacteria that creep down and spread from doctor to patient and back again. I say, why only doctors? Neckties are a hazard to all humans. Ban 'em everywhere... OK, I guess they're all right among consenting adults... in private!

—>*Private cop for fun and prizes dept:* The Calgary Herald reports that interneteyes.com is setting up a system where stores pay $32 a month to be members. Once paid, the store's surveillance monitors are broadcast on the website. Netsurfers watch the cameras and turn in shoplifters. The viewer who turns in the most shoplifters in one month wins more than $1000.

It's probably illegal to suggest some hacker switch the video feed to sweatshops in India... so I won't do that.

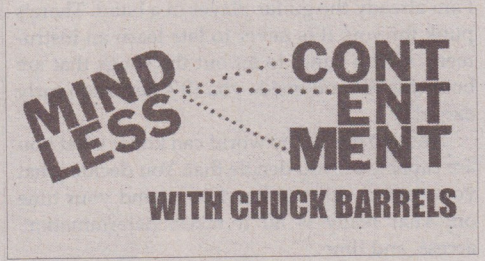
—>*My new heroine dept:* My jailbird pal Kyle sent me a link (http://wadvpress.org/?p=81) to a great article by Barbara Kay. I don't have space to go into detail, but you can guess the content from the title: "October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month—How About Making November False Allegations Awareness Month?"

Men are screaming and no one is listening. Why do women assault men? Because they can! (Thanks, Jim Goad)

—>*Free Speech on the other side dept:* Sid Yiddish sent me a link to an article about a Dallas County jail guard fired over supporting slavery ("It's in the Bible") and saying gay people should be put to death.

Where are the liberal free speech defenders in this case? Yeah right, that's what I thought.

—>*Holy (beer) shit dept:* Yow! Nothing like a birthday party to put you on to a new beer. I discovered Hop Stoopid, a gift from a guy who usually drinks wine. It is the best beer I've tasted this century. It comes in big 22-ounce bottles, but I was drinking it with some Mexican pals, so I didn't get most of it. Ah well, I could savor my third... quarter... fifth. I wonder if it comes in six packs.



Usually, I never have a shortage of records I want to talk about in this column. I'll be jamming to the latest 45 by Jimmy and the Jerks and be thinking to myself "Damn, I gotta write about this in that magazine column they pay me to do every coupla months..." And then I usually take another toke off the zong and forget about. But when I sober up the next morning I usually find some notes scribbled on a stray pizza box or Big Mac wrapper that I can use to pepper up this here column. But for some reason, this time around, there aren't any notes. It's not that there's a lack of discarded fast food wrappers around here to use as paper. It's just that I don't feel there are that many exceptional records coming through my doorway lately. Maybe I'm getting too old. Maybe I'm just getting too high. I don't know. What I do know is that for savvy music fans like myself, we look for the finest in recorded wares. Those bands, songs and records that really take your breath away, those are the ones to be remembered and played again and again. Those perfect moments that make you say "Fuck, I gotta hear that again." Where are those moments, those records? Do people still make them these days?

I'm only going to talk about two records for the bulk of this column. Cutting it short. Back ta basics. Because these two records are all I really feel the need to discuss. Everything else is B-team, Triple A ball, bush league, whatever. THE STOOGES died for our sins. Pig Champion is eating cheeseburgers in heaven. SLAYER haven't made a good record since 1990. THE HUNCHES burned out and faded away. Bon Scott, Stiv Bators and the kid from THE TREND are all packed in dirt. What the fuck am I supposed to do? I've fallen into these slumps many times before, and there's one place I always turn, one place where I know the spirit of rock'n'roll will always live and breathe, and that place is Cleveland, Ohio. You can trace a pretty decent line from DRAGONWYCK to JOHNNY AND THE DICKS to the BALONEY HEADS to NUMBSKULL to THE GUNS to INTEGRITY to BRAINWASHED YOUTH and everything in between. That's a fucking rock'n'roll lineage there people, and the city of Clevo lives and breathes it, no joking. Need proof? Read on.

So, let's talk about the only record I really feel like listening to for the rest of the year. Let's talk

about the *Night Deacon* EP by THE HOMOSTUPIDS. I think we all know how high in regard I hold these champions of rock already. But I think they've gone on to even another level here. Sure, sure *The Load* LP was all this and more—it really delivered the total HOMOSTUPIDS experience everyone needs. I'm not denying that was a fantastic record. But this one here, let me tell ya son, it's not a record to be trifled with. It's so good that it's dangerous. It's as if these heroes were sitting around and decided to make a record that exemplifies all that is good about punk, garage and hardcore, and actually pulled it off. This EP will in turn rock your face off, have you laughing, make you question whether this record is actually any good, make you scratch your head then laugh some more, and then finally make you realize you just listened to the best record of the year, no fuck that, the best record of the past five years perhaps. It's an unstoppable force, these seven inches of vinyl. Cheap thrills perhaps, but aren't those always the best kind? I don't understand how anyone could dare to call themselves a "punk" (or a heterosexual male) and not be blown away by this fucking thing. Total fucking destruction wrought by a trio of geniuses who know not the power they hold. Really, I don't even think THE HOMOSTUPIDS know the extent of the rock action they've brought, they're probably just in it for the free drugs being in an internationally renowned hardcore band brings. It's almost as if it's all one big joke that no one knows the punch line to. We're just along for the ride. But it's the only ride I dig more than my '83 Monte Carlo SS. Buy this record before I punch you in the face. (www.fashionableidiots.com)

And while we're talking about jokes, let's talk about this FOLDED SHIRT 7" while we're at it. Everyone thinks this is some goof-off record by a joke band. A bunch of retards farting on tape and making us all smell it, right? WRONG. You might remember another band of jokesters, a bunch of guys who seemed to have a bunch of terrible ideas which were made worse when they threw them all in the blender at once. They had names like Dave E. and John Morton, and everyone thought they were clowns too. Don't make the same mistake twice people, you let history keep repeating itself and it thinks it can get away with it. FOLDED SHIRT. The band is a collection of the essence of rock'n'roll, which is buried beneath Cleveland, and which drew the members of this band together from places as far away as Italy and California and Lakewood. They couldn't not form this band. They were drawn to Clevo like those people were drawn to that island on that TV show that's on ABC at the exact same time when I'm watching public access wrestling from the local VFW hall. You know what I mean. You're going to listen to this record and think "Oh no, I'm not falling for this crap! I'm waaay too smart for this type of chicanery!" And then you go and buy a fucking TOTAL ABUSE or DUM DUM GIRLS record and think you're being spoonfed ambrosia when you're really just eating shit. Slow down retard. Take the turd out of your mouth, fire up a ham sandwich and dig this hep noise. If you've heard *any* of the records anyone involved in this band has ever made, it will still not totally prepare you for what is happening here. Shockingly, this isn't even their best material. It's like they picked the least accessible cuts they possibly could for their debut single. They're making you fucking work for it, man. Can't you appreciate that? Oh, wait, no, you're the guy who wants to hear someone cover THE PACK for the fiftieth fucking time or the guy who really needs to hear another band ape SPACEMEN 3 badly or some kid in Des Moines vomit into a fuzz pedal, slap some reverb on it and call it "PUKEGAZE" or something "tricky" like that. Get a fucking grip. Stop letting people serve you ice cream cones full of feces. Take a fucking stand against boredom. Don't settle for what everyone else is buying on colored wax. Dig a little deeper. Let FOLDED SHIRT take you there, deep into their underground lair where down is up and up is down and smart is stupid and so are you. What? Buy the fucking record before I punch you in the face a second time. (www.fashionableidiots. com)

In The Red Record Dept.: You know what, I could care fucking less what anyone thinks, but if THEE OH SEES released a record every six months as good as this, I'd be happy. And by this, I'm referring to the *Warm Slime* LP due out next month on the Satanic Larry Hardy's In the Red Records label. It starts off with a fifteen minute opening track that jams spring into summer and right up your ass. People hate this band for some reason. I hate those people. For that reason. It's modern psych-rock, that's all, and they do it better than anyone else alive these days. Everyone else should stop fucking whining. Get a pair and grip this when it's available. I'll think of you while I'm listening to it until then. (www.intheredrecords.com)

Cool Single Dept.: I just talked about two of the only singles that matter just up there, but I'll cave and recommend something else to you clones and drones out there. CONDOMINIUM. They're from Minnesota. They want to rip your beard off and eat it and then read poetry to your girlfriend. I don't know exactly what that means, but they play a mean mash of le hardcore and nasty pig fucking rock. The *Gag* EP is available now and they've really nailed after three pretty good records. This one is the killer that I think sets the stage for a rager of an LP. Get on board the train now before you get stuck taking the bus. (www.deerhealer.com)

Cool Tape Dept.: Buffalo's BROWN SUGAR have a cassette out with all of their recordings, and it's wonderful. If you want to hear what the best hardcore band in the Rust Belt sounds like before they break up or get jobs, you should track one of these tapes down now. I'd do it in a hurry, before the apes rise to power and destroy all tape decks. Only 300 units available, or so says the bearded man. I've heard Jello Biafra *loves* it. (www.feralkidrecords.com)

Cool Reissue Dept.: Talk about a no-brainer. ENDTABLES 12" with both singles on it. Best vocals ever. Some of the finest KBD guitar styling as well. Bassist who can't play a lick. It's essential. A race with slime. (www.dragcity.com)

That's all for me, I'll see you sausage heads next time. Bang bang!

THE DICKTATOR

mariam bastani

When I got the coordinator position, I was excited that I had a column to write every month, but was a little worried about having shit to write about. Luckily, reacting to the material that comes through here will provide me with things to write about for the rest of my natural life. I promised myself that I would start writing more about actual punk music that is blowing me away right now, but I have to respond to the internal battle going on here about reviewing standards. Our reviewers are generally badass and have a ton of musical knowledge (as many of you all do also), making them capable of an insightful, well written, concise review, but sometimes some thing goes wrong. Sometimes people are just straight up busy. All of these reviewers have a ton of shit going on all the time. But for the real stinkers, I have nailed it down to two categories, reviewers get either lazy or jaded. Both suck and are a disservice to any band who has been awesome enough to send us stuff for review and to keep the collection up to date.

I tend to stand by our reviewers, because when we get a pissed off letter and go over the review in question, I just have to respond that *MRR* isn't gonna like everything that comes through here, but keep fucking playing, cuz there are people who might dig your stuff. With that being said, I have to say that I would agree with the criticism that we have received about the Expendable Youth 7" that xYosefx wrote. Felix wrote a killer letter that appears in the letters section this month, but I feel I have to respond. I agree that portions of the review were somewhat irrelevant to the actual 7" and seem to tell us more about the reviewer than the record in question. In Yosef's defense, he really does try to research the band, as well as the record he is reviewing as much as he can. I think where he fell short, as many reviewers including myself have, is in understanding how the context of the music relates to the location of the band. I know some will say, "What the fuck does that have to do with music?" I hate to tell ya, but if you are a band that wants to take on political and social issues in your music, then you open yourself up to some scrutiny.

I happen to know that the issues addressed by Expendable Youth in this 7" are ones that directly affect them, because of the intersectionality of their location, cultures, gender, economic status, etc. As Felix outlined briefly, but beautifully in his letter, the individuals in this band live in a city that is notorious for injustice and unfair treatment, but they take the good with the bad, and instead of fleeing, they choose to stay and fight for a place they love. They take an active part in trying to make it better, not just for themselves or other punks, but for everyone. No one is going to move them, their friends or their fam-

ilies out of their home. No one tells them what the fuck to do without good reason. To me, that's punk as fuck. My purpose is not to expound on the virtues of Expendable Youth or the Chicago punk scene, but to let people know that despite the fucked up shit that happens in any punk scene, there is a very real alliance between activism and punk in Chicago. I would argue that this alliance exists in most of the punk world. This alliance is born out of many situations (family life, education—basic and higher, crime, environmental issues, culture, etc…), but mostly out of the need to make their surroundings better and to take apart in combating injustices that *affect everyday life*.

With that being said, I know *plenty* of bands that include some of the same issues addressed by the record we are discussing, if not more, that definitely do not practice the unity and/or struggle that they love to bank on (that shit talking will be reserved for when I am drunk…). It's a let down, but what's worse is when a band uses the very real struggles of others to "prescribe" solutions to the rest of us. Well, you can fuck right off with that. Saying someone is a victim of their own naïve idealism, is a pretty shitty and judgmental thing to say about people who have had some severe struggles their whole lives. If anything, if people aren't beaten down, keep coming back and can still be non annoyingly positive or pushy with their beliefs, I would say that's a success. There is nothing I personally hate more than people who talk about shit they know nothing about, and people who believe their way is the right way. Everyone knows that everyone starts somewhere in their activist and/or punk life and mistakes will be made. No one has to be "political" if they don't want to, but to ignore that the world is a fucked up place is a luxury, so don't forget that and don't shove it in the face of those who don't have a choice. I also know that people will be let down by things they believed so strongly in, but in the end, your disillusionment is your own and to slam others for wanting to make their situation better, is not only shitty, but irresponsible.

Now, I know that words like "activism," "protest," "community," "injustice," are an instant turn off for lots of punks that hate this imaginary "PC" policing of the scene, but I assure you that if you look beyond bias, and the assholes who love to use those terms without knowing what the hell they mean, those are some pretty great words. The advantage I would say many of us share, is that we can, to some degree, use music for the same purpose and even convey more than words ever could or speak to places that words can't reach (whoa, fucking hippie alert…). Yeah, that's open to interpretation, but we got this tape for review with a note in response to Osa's column when she talked about having a shitty time playing a show in Houston. These kids in Houston apparently read the column and instead of sending a snotty email or going on a message board and whining like bed wetter, or talking shit, they made a mix of local Houston bands and sent it our way. *He made a fucking mix of bands in the Houston punk scene!!* That is the best form of "protest," if I have ever seen one. I hope others will follow suit! I haven't listened to the CDr in question, but Robert reviewed it for the demos section for next month. They offer the CDr to whoever wants to send a SASE. I would say donations are probably cool and don't forget to send an envelope that will accommodate a CDr. Write to: Jeff Schmidt, 4402 Spencer B, Houston, TX 77007.

Lastly, some random junk. Check out the story by Ashley Naftule in the news section about Arizona and their fucked up move. Osa, thank you for writing about the Taqwacore scene, because they are doing something in the punk scene that no one else is. I wanna say that the new Slices LP *Cruising* is the shit. The Endtables (Lousiville, KY 1979!) reissue on Drag City is definitely worth the search if you dig good lyrics, the Big Boys and Gary Floyd influence. There is a badass interview with them on *Victim of Time*. I want to say thanks to N. Campbell in San Quentin for sending us a S.Q. calendar that now adorns our fridge at the *MRR* compound. Chinga la migra y los malditos en Arizona. No nos van a "madar" a ningun lado. Somos la Mayoria y un dia vas a ver que significa eso…
mariam@maximumrocknroll.com

I have been playing music since I was thirteen. I am now 32. I think I have played in eight bands total. I moved to San Francisco in 2005 and since then have played in one band, with my former roommates Jess Scott (of Brilliant Colors fame) and Tommy Strange (of Zero Defex fame). We have a tape, it was made in an afternoon, which is also how long the band lasted. It is now 2010. And I have been in one band, for one afternoon in the past five years. My first band, Skinned Teen, formed after we went to see Huggy Bear and Bikini Kill in London, where I grew up. One of the girls I was hanging out with told Kathleen Hanna we were in a band, and she offered us a show the week after that. We were not in a band, just wanted to be after witnessing the life affirming and life changing spectacle of Bikini Kill and Huggy Bear… We were thirteen and fourteen, and had just discovered underground punk rock, after a year or so of going to see bands like Mudhoney and Nirvana, Jesus and Mary Chain and PJ Harvey. Whatever the *NME* and *Melody Maker* were championing that week was what we were into, obviously not completely, for instance the Grebo scene seemed dire to my ears at least... Witnessing the HB/BK tour made us feel like it was in our hands, our boredom and alienation could be transformed by none other than our own sense of what was possible. Huggy Bear used to make a fanzine for every show they played, sometimes a huge elaborate 100 page opus, sometimes a one sheet thing folded in half, that they called *Bullet-Teens*. The fact that they were all super ancient (probably in their twenties…) yet constantly referred to teen culture and youth as being the true punk troops made us want to realize that vision. And we did.

We didn't play our first show with Bikini Kill, we played a month or so later at an all girl band show, which also featured the awesome Furbelows, which was Jo and Niki from Huggy Bear's all girl garage band. We made a tape in my bedroom and gave 'em out to whoever asked, and ended up putting out four records by the time we broke up, when we were all seventeen. After that I played in a bunch of bands that only made tapes, bands that only existed in name and concept, and bands that were more about hanging out and skateboarding than actually making music. From the Fucking French Boyfriends to Elle Touer, SS Lucifer to the Frigidairres, the first "real" band I did was when I was 19, called Petty Crime. By "real" I mean a band that played shows and existed as part of a punk community rather than as a hang out opportunity between the six or seven girls I skated with. I actually have a list somewhere of every band name we came up with, something like fifty conceptual bands, some of which made tapes, which I think I still have, some of which were just conversations.

When I was in Skinned Teen there were a group of dudes at our drummer Esme's secondary school who were in a Pearl Jam cover band. It used to drive them absolutely fucking insane that we played shows with Sonic Youth offshoots and they were playing in the beer garden at local pubs. They couldn't understand why we, who "couldn't play" were somehow given all these opportunities to "make it," while they languished with their guitar skills and "Jeremy" covers in cruddy old Brentford pubs. We refused to give interviews to the music papers, we didn't want to "make it" we wanted to make music, have a good time and connect with other grrrls. We wanted to find the weirdos who didn't want to be part of the music industry, who wanted to make their own thing on their own terms. To make a subculture rather than pursue sponsorship opportunities. When we get sent demo tapes at *MRR*, I like the ones that sound like they were made by people who can't help but exist in that same idea of music. Music that sounds like it wasn't an attempt to make a perfect carbon copy of a specific era of hardcore or punk history. I like it when a band sounds like they were trying to make a certain sound, but couldn't, so they ended up with some weirdo shit out of necessity rather than conceit.

I started writing about this because for the first time in about five years I picked up my guitar and started playing again last week. I am not sure why I stopped, but I am going to try make myself play regularly. My friend Tobi says that she sets aside a couple hours a week just to play guitar, otherwise it doesn't happen. I am going to try do this. I am also going to try and write every day. This pile of drivel that I emit each month is the only thing I write anymore. I used to put out my own zines, which I haven't for a few years. Mostly I don't think I have the time to do it, running *MRR* is super life consuming… I haven't even made anyone a mix tape for an epic amount of time, which I used to do on a monthly basis. I wrote this just to remind myself to continue to produce punk culture outside of these inky pages you hold in your hands. And if you are reading this, and I owe you a mix tape—it's on the way!
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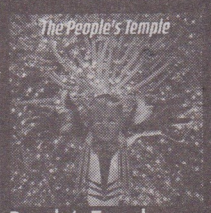

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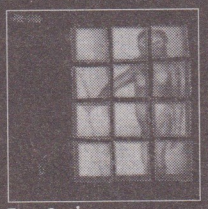
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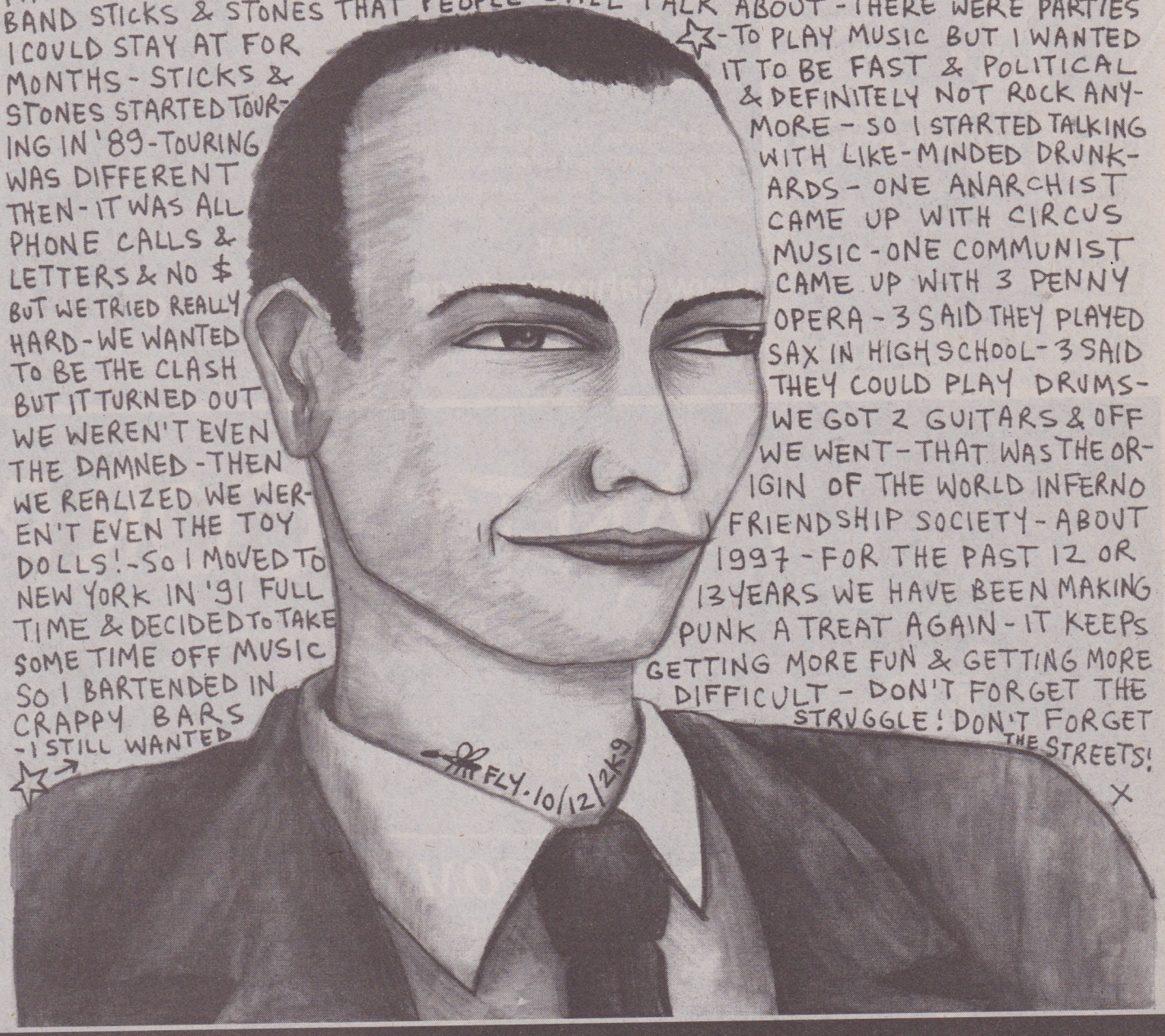
RICHMOND VA

I WAS BORN IN A SMALL HOVEL IN NEW JERSEY IN 1970 - I HAD A TYPICAL DISAFFECTED PRE PUNK ADOLESENCE - I STARTED SNEAKING TO NYC & SAW MY FIRST SHOW AT CBGB's IN 1984 - I HAD TO BRING A FAKE BAPTISMAL RECORD TO PROVE I WAS 16 - IT WAS SUICIDAL TENDENCIES & THE OPENING BAND WAS FROM NEW JERSEY - BODIES IN PANIC - & THEY GAVE ME A RIDE HOME! IT WAS GREAT - I STARTED GOING TO CB's SHOWS EVERY WEEKEND & THEN I WAS HANGING OUT IN THE CITY ALL THE TIME BUT THEN I GOT ARRESTED FOR SOMETHING & I HAD TO GO BACK TO HIGH SCHOOL - WHICH WAS AN EXTREMELY DANGEROUS PLACE - ONE OF MY FRIEND's GOT THROWN THRU A WINDOW - SO I DECIDED TO RUN AWAY SO I RAN TO NEW BRUNSWICK N.J. - THE CLOSEST BIGGISH CITY - IT HAD A PRETTY GOOD SCENE - THERE WAS A COLLEGE THERE & I COULD PASS FOR A COLLEGE STUDENT & CRASH ON DORM COUCHES - I STARTED THE BAND STICKS & STONES THAT PEOPLE STILL TALK ABOUT - THERE WERE PARTIES I COULD STAY AT FOR MONTHS - STICKS & STONES STARTED TOURING IN '89 - TOURING WAS DIFFERENT THEN - IT WAS ALL PHONE CALLS & LETTERS & NO $ BUT WE TRIED REALLY HARD - WE WANTED TO BE THE CLASH BUT IT TURNED OUT WE WEREN'T EVEN THE DAMNED - THEN WE REALIZED WE WEREN'T EVEN THE TOY DOLLS! - SO I MOVED TO NEW YORK IN '91 FULL TIME & DECIDED TO TAKE SOME TIME OFF MUSIC SO I BARTENDED IN CRAPPY BARS - I STILL WANTED ☆→ - TO PLAY MUSIC BUT I WANTED IT TO BE FAST & POLITICAL & DEFINITELY NOT ROCK ANYMORE - SO I STARTED TALKING WITH LIKE-MINDED DRUNKARDS - ONE ANARCHIST CAME UP WITH CIRCUS MUSIC - ONE COMMUNIST CAME UP WITH 3 PENNY OPERA - 3 SAID THEY PLAYED SAX IN HIGH SCHOOL - 3 SAID THEY COULD PLAY DRUMS - WE GOT 2 GUITARS & OFF WE WENT - THAT WAS THE ORIGIN OF THE WORLD INFERNO FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY - ABOUT 1997 - FOR THE PAST 12 OR 13 YEARS WE HAVE BEEN MAKING PUNK A TREAT AGAIN - IT KEEPS GETTING MORE FUN & GETTING MORE DIFFICULT - DON'T FORGET THE STRUGGLE! DON'T FORGET THE STREETS! X



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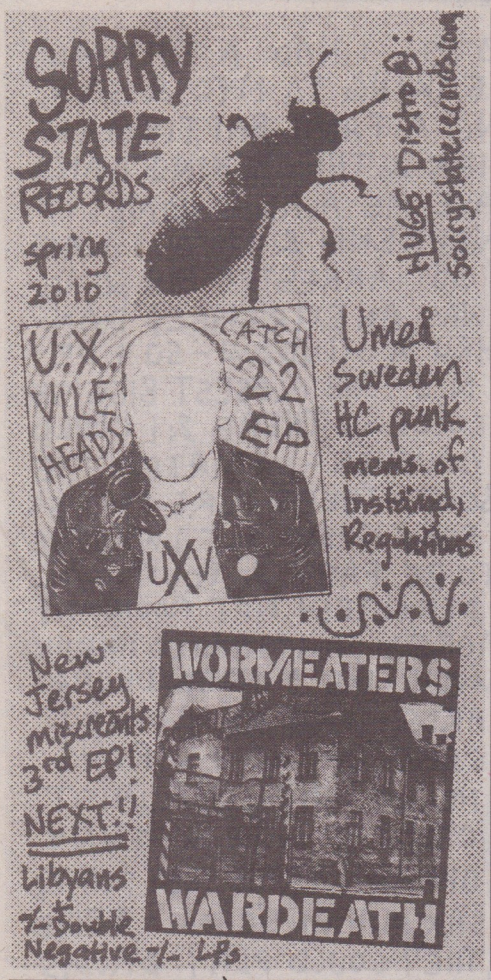

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NEWS

MRR NEWS COMPILED BY MRR KREW

NO SURPRISES HERE IN ARIZONA: ON THE INEVITABLITY OF THE IMMIGRATION DEBACLE

By Ashley Naftule

I wish I could say it was a surprise when our governor Jan Brewer signed SB1070 into law, I wish I could say that the creation of said law was an unpleasant surprise in the first place, but the only people in this country right now who aren't baffled and shocked by the political bombs detonated here are Arizonans themselves. This is simply the logical end result of over a decade of fear-mongering, racist police action, and authoritarian policies snowballing into this crushing defeat for civil liberties and human dignity. When AZ governor Evan Meacham did his rain dance of national shame in 1987 by opposing Martin Luther King Day, setting off a wave of tourist boycotts, it was hoped by us locals that that would be our nadir, that Arizona could never embarass itself again as badly as it did during the Meacham years. To say that we were wrong on that count is the understatement of the year.

To understand SB1070 and its darker implications, one has to look at its creator: State Senator Russell Pearce. A man who in 2006 forwarded white supremacist emails from the National Alliance to a group of his supporters. A man whose been known to pal around with neo-Nazi and anti-immigration activist J.T. Ready (who also happens to be a big supporter and hob-nobber with Sheriff Joe Arpaio). A man fired from the MVD for tampering with DUI files as a political favor. A man who claimed that folks advocating against SB1070 were acting treasonous, committing an act that "was just short of a domestic terrorist act". A man who in 2006 praised Eisenhower's "Operation Wetback," which in 1954 led to almost a million Hispanics being rounded up and deported, or fleeing the country of their own volition to avoid the seizures. A man whose been re-elected in this state, despite his loathsome and openly racist politics, whose been coddled and defended by both the Republican party and by the Democrats (Janet Napolitano, current US Secretary of Homeland Security and Jan Brewer's predecessor as AZ Governor, sat on her hands throughout Pearce and Arpaio's racist grandstanding and power plays, squandering whatever power the Left and moderates had to oppose our developing police state).

A bill that requires everyone to have their papers on them at all at times, to prove their citizenship on the spot or else, would be unthinkable in most states. But not Arizona, the state that's re-elected Joe Arpaio as Sheriff over and over again, in spite of the millions of dollars in wrongful death suits he's cost the state due to his poorly run and brutal prisons (prisons which Amnesty International declared to be comparable to third world hell-hole prisons). Arpaio, a man who like Pearce, has openly courted the votes and public support of racist "nativist" activists, and who has refused to repudiate his Neo-Nazi supporters, who have often appeared to heckle at immigration rallies and have had Sheriff deputies protecting them and violently harassing anyone who gets in the nativist's faces. A Sheriff who has used his power to do immigration round-ups at public libraries, and has arrested and used intimidation tactics on his most vocal press critics at the Phoenix New Times.

An important point to consider in all of this is that the average Arizonan is not a deranged Mexican-hating police state fetishist. There have been activist groups here like No More Deaths and Arizona Advocacy Network that have been aiding immigrants in their fight against harassment and deportation, and have been pushing for cleaner elections. There are police groups and figures who have often opposed Arpaio's actions in the past, and are coming out strongly about the bill now, like Yuma County's Sheriff Ralph Ogden. Some cities, like Guadalupe, have openly butted heads with Arpaio for his illegals round-ups. And since the passing of SB1070, thousands of Arizona citizens have shown their outrage for this bill this weekend in organized protests. And there have already been two referendum drives to get SB1070 overturned, which could put the law on hold until November 2012 if the petition organizers fail to make this year's ballot. And if it does make this year's ballot, one hopes that the public outcry, national shame, and threats of boycotts from other states will be enough to get the votes we need to consign SB1070 into the dustbins of history.

On April 26th's *The Daily Show*, Jon Stewart called Arizona "the meth lab of democracy." A funny line, but the truth is worse than that. We're more like a rotting bonsai tree, the grand gnarled oak of American politics shrunk down in miniature. The Arizona populace, much like the rest of America, remains more or less politically moderate and disengaged in civic affairs; the only ones who show up in great numbers at voting booths and town-hall meetings are the elderly, the xenophobic, and those who are easily bamboozled by Astroturf political movements. The Arizona Right, like the rest of the American Right, becomes more and more shrill in their authoritarian fear-everything madness, gaining ground because they can shout over anyone else in the room. As for the establishment mainstream Arizona Left, like the rest of the establishment mainstream American Left, it is cowering in the corner with their fingers jammed in their ears, sitting on their hands, angling for bipartisanship and willing to bend over backwards to compromise so as not to alienate a conservative population that won't support them in a 1,000 years, all the while betting that there is no way that sane rational people could possibly eat up the deranged shit that the Right is serving (and as we can see, they are horribly, horribly mistaken on that note). Keep this in mind the next time you grin smugly in a mirror and think "at least I don't live in Arizona:" you may not live here now, but if things don't change, here may be everywhere soon enough.

RENT HIKE JEOPORDIZES 924 GILMAN

By Paul Curran

924 Gilman, the legendary Berkeley all-ages club that we've known and loved for over two decades now, has hit a major financial roadblock and is calling for everyone's support to help ensure the club's survival. As of July 1st of this year, Gilman's rent will nearly double to almost $7000 per month, leaving the volunteer-run venue scrambling for the necessary income to make ends meet.

The official Gilman website reports, "The club's rent has been increasing every year for the last twenty three years, and up until now we've been able to make the adjustments needed to compensate for those increases, but what we are facing now is the equivalent of having twenty years of rent increases condensed into one, and once it goes into effect the clock will begin to tick away as we struggle to generate the extra $31,000 a year needed to cover this massive rent hike."

Karen O'Brien, 924 Gilman's Executive Director tells *MRR*, "We have two months to figure out how to generate the $2500+ per month difference in rent. Our entire income comes from shows and generous donations. We have a donation link on our website at www.924gilman.org. Since April 10th we have received a lot of support and are very, very grateful for it!"

The historical significance of this legendary show space probably doesn't need to be repeated here. Suffice to say that hundreds and hundreds of bands, big and small, great and awful, silly and intense—hell, probably even your band—have been given their 25 to 35 of minutes of limelight on the Gilman stage. But we the punks, never ones to rest on our laurels, know that it's all for naught if we don't preserve this invaluable resource for the future punks.

The *San Francisco Chronicle* picked up on this story, and in typical mainstream media fashion described Gilman as the "incubator for countless punk bands," as if it's merely a launching pad for bands who want to really "make it." But they did manage to do a bit of actual investigation and talked to the rent-hiker in question, Gilman's landlord and next door neighbor, Jim Widess. In an almost comical example of how people of lower incomes are made to bear the brunt of the economic crisis that they had no part in creating, the *Chron* describes the situation this way:

"Widess said he was forced to increase the rent after hitting an economic rough patch. 'We really support what they're doing. We have no desire to see them out. We've had a wonderful relationship. We just want to make it a workable situation for both of us.'"

It doesn't take much reading between the lines to see what's going on here: the non-profit community space that has been financially responsible and self sufficient for its entire existence is now paying for someone else's poor money management.

It's too early to tell exactly where this will go. This rent crisis has generated a lot of anger, ideas, hare-brained schemes, etc., but what is clearly needed the most right now is support in the form of money and elbow grease. If you care about keeping Gilman alive, pitch in! Send them money if you can, campaign to get others to donate, and if you live in the area (especially in you are a Berkeley resident) get involved at the club, or in rallying community support.

MRR will be reporting as more develops.

"The support we're receiving from all around the world makes it kind of hard not to be hopeful" Jay Unidos

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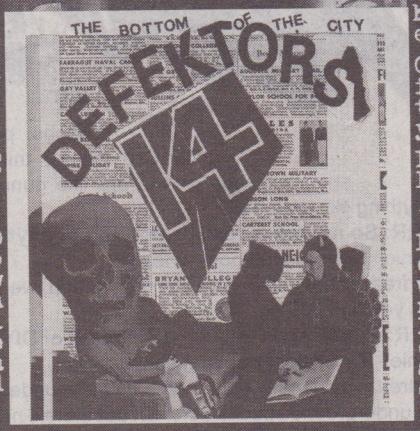

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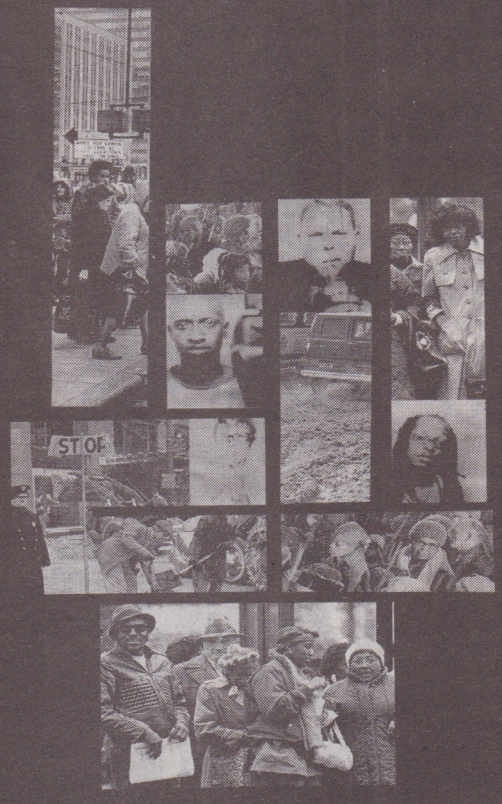

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NÜ SENSAE

Nü Sensae is a two-piece noise destruction coming out of Vancouver, Canada's weirdo noise punk scene. They are one of my favorite bands right now sounding like a growled out, cut down Babes in Toyland. Nü Sensaes new album *TV, Death and The Devil* is out on Nominal records. *We talked for a second at a recent show.*

Interview by Marissa Magic.
Photos by Steve Louie and Leanne Carmichael.

MRR: Introduce yourselves

Daniel: I'm Daniel

Andrea: Andrea

MRR: And what do you do?

Daniel: I play the drums

Andrea: Bass

Daniel: And?

Andrea: Sing

MRR: How did you start?

Daniel: Andrea and I went to high school together, so we met there. We used to have a band before this with two other people and we just started playing on our own one day and we decided to make another band out of it

MRR: What was the other band?

Daniel: Maggie Gutwrath

MRR: When did Nü Sensae start?

Andrea: 2007

Daniel: March

Andrea: To be exact…

Daniel: 23rd

Andrea: That was our first show.

MRR: How is Vancouver?

Daniel: All the bands sound pretty different. I think because it's not a really small city, but the music community is small enough that it's not really specific—the garage scene or the noise scene or whatever—everybody kind of supports everything.

Andrea: There's all these weird sort of subgenres within it, because there is garage-y type bands, but nothing is really that straight forward, there's always some sort of weird noisiness to it.

Daniel: I feel like experimental type music hit everyone in Vancouver pretty hard when they were growing up or something because I feel like all the bands…

Andrea: Barely anyone starts straight forward.

Daniel: Everyone has pretty experimental leanings, people are really into the whole DIY culture thing there. I don't know anyone in bands who are like gunning for the big time or anything like that.

MRR: So no one is really careering or anything?

Daniel: Nobody we know, at least.

Andrea: There's no all ages scene though, we were talking about this yesterday

MRR: But all ages is such a hallmark of DIY scenes…

Daniel: It's interesting because…

Andrea: You're allowed to come if you're underage, most of the underground spaces don't ID, but there's nothing that's geared towards young people specifically and at most of those underground venues shows start really late, and they're illegal and in sort of industrial areas, with vague addresses so it's hard to find sometimes, especially if you're a kid who lives in the suburbs.

Daniel: That's something that's very different too, I feel like the majority of bands that come out of Vancouver are really based in the city so there's barely any access from the suburbs for kids, there's a pretty big gap with that.

Andrea: Every so often there will be a show…

Daniel: And all these young kids come out of the woodwork, and it's just like, where do you come from?

MRR: Like a legit all ages show?

Andrea: A show that's weirdly advertised, that says it starts at eight, which it never does, earliest eleven, we set up a show for that Seattle band Last Slice of Butter, and the guy thought that the show was getting canceled because it was midnight and no one had played yet.

Daniel: In Vancouver everyone just waits until there are enough people to play.

Andrea: And around midnight all the people start to pour in.

Daniel: It's funny most of the shows that we play in America if it says it starts at nine it starts at nine no matter how many people are there.

Andrea: But that's with legit places.

MRR: Well at legit all ages spaces things are run really tightly…when I lived in a house that had shows I would have teenagers show up at the time that was on the flyer but everyone else wouldn't show up for at least two hours.

Daniel: That's the telltale sign of an underage kid, the doors open and they're like sitting on

"...THIS NEW RECORD..."

the couch waiting, wearing too much makeup... but the scene in general is really strong in Vancouver.

Andrea: There are a lot of girls.

Daniel: Pretty much every band is either female fronted or has at least one girl in it.

Andrea: For a while I couldn't think of any local band that didn't have a girl in it.

MRR: What do you think the catalyst for that was?

Andrea: I think it started off probably as a fluke, a couple bands, and then I remember seeing bands like Mutators, when they had their first singer Lianne and you realize there's a different way of being a girl in a band because you kind of assume perhaps that either you have to prove that you're really good or really entertaining, Vancouver's not really like that, she was captivating without any gimmicks, that seems to be the trend in Vancouver.

MRR: It's more just like, "I'm in a band, whatever."

Andrea: Yeah.

MRR: It's interesting because I feel like here, or at least I grew up around people who told me I couldn't be in band or play an instrument or whatever...

Andrea: That's the difference.

Daniel: Vancouver is really supportive, we started going to shows right around when we started Maggie Gutwrath, and I just felt really included immediately and I felt really inspired by everyone I met and all the different bands so it was really easy to write songs and stuff, you didn't feel like you had to go on stage and be this great musician.

Andrea: You don't have to play a role... no one is out to be a showman, I think that's a big part of it. I mean they are, but just like Ryan Dyck from B-Lines, who's pretty quiet and reserved and awkward, but explodes and it works, and it's rad. People in Vancouver seem to be good at channeling their dysfunction and boredom and anger. It's pretty sincere.

Daniel: And things like touring and putting out records was never even a thought, you just wanted to go and show what you wanted to do.

MRR: Not really a lot of self-consciousness about it?

Daniel: I think a lot of people are wanting to do more for the scene or whatever, like with the all ages thing. People are working on it to make it better. They just started doing girls rock camp, we've been a little bit involved in that, we played a workshop and we played their showcase.

Andrea: We played their performance night, which was amazing; the kids are incredible.

MRR: The show where all the campers bands are playing?

Andrea: I think there was one band called Sonic Vomit?

Daniel: Yeah... oh no wait that's a song name...

Andrea: Psycho Vomit?

Daniel: Biohazard Vomit?

Andrea: And the lyrics were like "insane in my brain/this is pain."

Daniel: And the girl was like seven.

MRR: It's always so crazy with girls rock camp, not only is it getting to work with a bunch of amazing women but then there's all these kids that say these mind-blowing things and you're just like, where did you come up with that and I'm so glad you just said it.

Daniel: I think it's really important, because there's this really huge war in Vancouver over trying to play the kind of music that our bands play. There's not really an abundance of venues and it's been a really big struggle kind of, so I feel like people have been really focused on that one aspect of just trying to do what we want to do and forgetting about the kind of responsibility of getting a younger generation involved, the kind of thing that actually got us involved. Everybody forgot about that for a while, so I feel like it's important that that type of girls rock camp thing keeps happening. I think it's important that kids know that there are other ways of thinking about music...

Andrea: Well there's girls rock camp that caters to young kids, and then there's our scene that caters to us, but there's nothing really for that middle ground, like high school, end of high school transitional period.

MRR: Right when you're trying to figure out what the fuck to do.

Andrea: I mean we went to bars illegally when we were underage.

Daniel: But you shouldn't have to take those kinds of measures to feel included or feel like you can express yourself however you want to... I feel like it should be easier.

IS FULL OF SECRETS"

MRR: Is hard to have house shows and things like that?
Daniel: Surprisingly not.
Andrea: Like the Alf house, which is like this punk house where we played our first show, they still have shows, I've never been to a show there that's been shut down but they're in a more industrial area.
Daniel: So it depends on where the house is, you couldn't have a house show just anywhere, but that's kind of the same anywhere.
MRR: It seems like in some cities the cops really hard line it.
Andrea: Vancouver pushes it though, like every weekend or three times a week and then it gets shut down and everyone is in shock.
Daniel: It's kind of like, what did you expect?
Andrea: It's hard to tell and things change over time, I'm not sure, we're not really involved in those spaces like we were last year, so I don't know what it's like now.
Daniel: Like logistically with the law or whatever.
MRR: can you talk about the emergency room a little?
Daniel: The emergency room was an underground rehearsal space in Vancouver, turned venue. We used to rent there with a bunch of bands like Defektors, Vapid, No Gold, Mutators, Modern Creatures... and we helped run the shows stuff. It was a really fun place, cause it was run by all our friends and we would play a lot of shows there. But it eventually turned into an afterhours boozecan for like 30 something downtown club goers, and then we got broken into on Christmas Eve so we all left and shut it down.
Andrea: Coming out of high school and finding a space like the ER was pretty exciting!
MRR: What are you trying to do with your band?
Andrea: Go on tour.
Daniel: I don't think we really have a specific goal in mind. I think I do it for a few different reasons, if there was a goal that realistically you could meet, I would be really content if I could just play music and sustain myself, I don't ever suspect that we would ever be a really well known band. I think it would be nice to be able to tour and do what we want to do. I find it really... when we tour and find out people here know of us or go to different places and people have our stuff and are really into it I feel like that's the best feeling ever for me. I think it's crazy that people are interested in something I do, it sounds stupid but... the first time I noticed people singing along to Andrea's lyrics I almost stopped playing—I was almost embarrassed.
Andrea: Because they knew what they were.
Daniel: It's almost like someone has gone through your diary and they're like, "Yeah, it was pretty good." It's so shocking and it's something so personal and you're making someone else share in it is a really bizarre feeling, but that's the feeling that I love... and we love touring, I feel the best when we're touring.
Andrea: And I think for me when you start a band you don't start off feeling like you have any responsibility to anyone, I remember on the first tour I had a really hard time when I was tired or whatever to just get through a set, I was really stubborn if I was in a bad mood, but now, now I'm feel like, ok, I came all the way here, these people have paid, I gotta play... it's fun.
Daniel: We just recently took a lot of time off from playing shows to write for our album, it was really... it was the first time we hadn't been playing since we started and it was actually really hard on us, because we got so used to the way it feels. I think it was good in a way because it kind of reminded me of how good it is to be able to have people come to our shows and listen to our music, just because we played so much before that that it was easy to forget.
MRR: That it keeps you sane...
Daniel: Yeah totally, and it just makes it so much better when you go back and play and you remember what it's like.
MRR: How did you end up being a two-piece?
Andrea: We tried a guitar player...
Daniel: The band we were in before—I played drums and Andrea played bass but she didn't sing, we had a singer and a guitar player and one day they didn't come to a practice and we did, and Andrea and I had come up with the name Nü Sensae when we were kids, it was kind of our fantasy band, like when we were 14 we'd always joke that we were in a band called Nü Sensae.
MRR: What does Nü Sensae mean anyways?
Both: Nothing
Daniel: So we just started jamming different songs without them, then Andrea just started singing to them and we really liked it so we were just like oh, lets call this Nü Sensae and then we booked one show, like it was supposed to be our side thing, but then Maggie Gutwrath ended up breaking up, and we were writing a lot more songs after that
Andrea: But we got self conscious, without a guitar player.
Daniel: After our first show at the Alf house... We thought it went so bad.
Andrea: I had to play with my back to everyone.
Daniel: We played three covers because we didn't have enough songs, so after the show we got our friend Nikki who plays and sings in Modern Creatures to play guitar with us, and so she practiced with us and played one show with us, and then we realized that we were just copping out and being insecure.
Andrea: And also we're just more comfortable like this, I've known Daniel for so long, I couldn't even practice around Nikki really... and it's not personal.
Daniel: Andrea and I have other projects outside of Nü Sensae where we play with other people and it's super fun and I love it but it's so easy making music with Andrea because I've known her so long that you don't feel like I need to hold back, like if she plays something I don't like I'll just say that sounds shitty and I don't feel like I'm going to hurt her feelings or anything.
MRR: Where do the lyrics come from?
Andrea: I use a lot of the same words over and over again, I'm kind of the same about visual arts, you develop a vocabulary and then it becomes your currency. This new record is full of secrets. I'm really into secrets. Secrets and fright wigs.
MRR: Tell me more about your visual art, I saw you had a book with Justin from Random Cuts?
Andrea: I do a lot of collage work. I also make free books, which I bring on tour and try and give out to whoever will take one. Justin Gradin and I used to go to a lot of weird parties where we didn't really feel like we were supposed to be at so we decided to unite and become an entity called Critics. We put out a book of collages and a 7 inch of sound collage last year. It's more like a band than anything, minus any practicing.
MRR: Talk about recording.
Daniel: We recorded with our friend Jesse Taylor from Twin Crystals. It's our first, well our second album... We call the self-titled one our first album but it was a one-sided twelve-inch, so I guess it's not really an album, but this next one is like a full length.
Andrea: Double-sided.
Daniel: LP—it's twelve brand new songs and it's going to come out in May on our new label, Nominal Records.
Andrea: Sean who runs Nominal is amazing, he put out a lot of really rad records this past year and a half, two years; ER comp, Mutators, Defektors, Random Cuts, B-lines, etc. He's done a lot!
Daniel: Then once it comes out we're doing a big US tour with Shearing Pinx in the summer, eight weeks. And then a five week Cross-Canada tour with Ahna in August.

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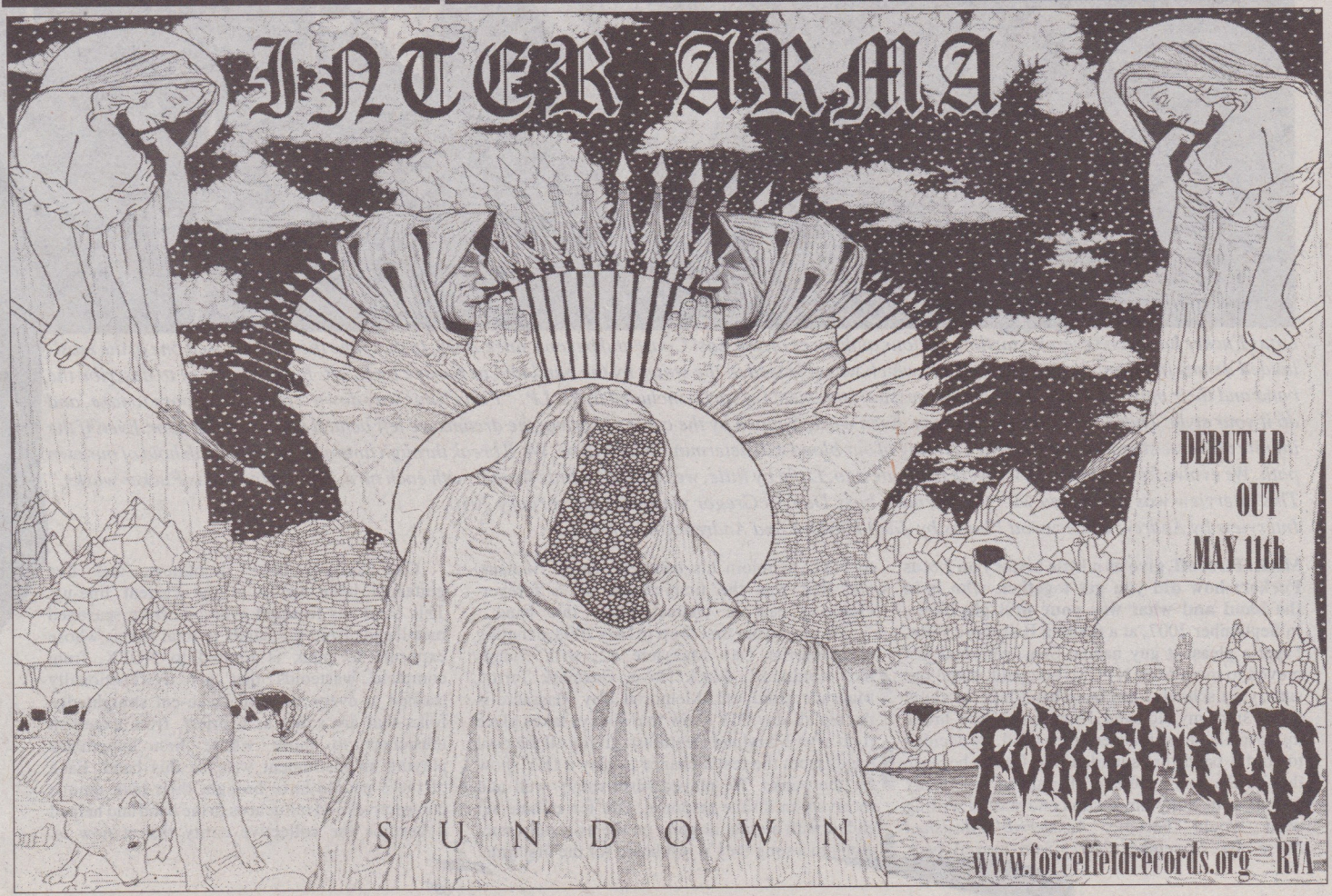

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LOTUS FUCKER

Lotus Fucker has been severely startling various audiences on the East Coast and beyond since 2008. In that time they've released one of the most-lauded demos in recent memory and an LP, which was released in the states by the band and in Europe by R.S.R. Rather than try to describe the band and their music, I'll simply quote the mission statement (of sorts) included in the LP: "Force your way down a path you choose to take, and do it your style. That's the Lotus Fucker way. Even when trapped by the cycle of karma, the dreams we left behind will open the door. Even if the infinite universe stands in our way, the seething of our blood will determine what will be. We'll break through time and space to grab hold of our own path. We evolve from the person we were a minute ago. Little by little, we advance a little further with each turn. That's how Lotus Fucker works." This interview was conducted with the eternally busy Dan McGregor via email in February 2010.

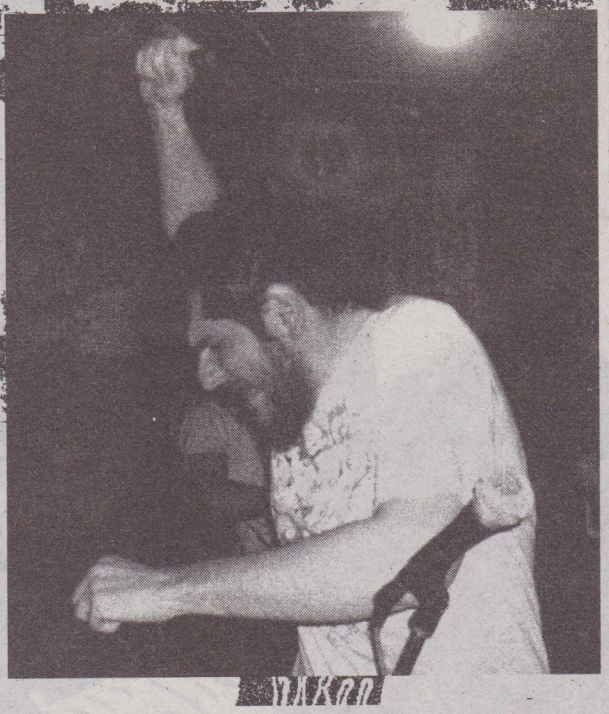
Interview by Andrew Underwood Photos by Zach Howard and Andrew Underwood

MRR: First off, give us a little history on Lotus Fucker: how did you get together, who is in the band and what was your first gig like?..

In September 2007, at a random Baltimore show, I met a pleasant guy named Sam, who had just moved to town from NYC so he could attend our snazzy art school. I had been band-less for about a year since my old band, Kamikaze Noise, broke up, so to fill our mutual need for a band, we decided to start a band that sounded like Gauze because they're the best band ever. I grabbed two of my friends to be a rhythm section and started writing what would become *Answer=Bloodwashed Noise*. By November 2007, Sam moved back to NYC to rejoin his band, Dawn of Humans, and that was the first change in a forever-changing cast of characters for this band...

We played our first show in May 2008, debuting at Memorial Day Massacre #2, with friends like XbrainiaX, Black Dove, Gasmask Terror, Magrudergrind, etc. Memorial Day Massacre is the big all-day DIY show that always takes place right after Maryland Deathfest, giving all the cool bands from the fest a chance to play a DIY show for the punks. We played surprisingly well and received an insane response. Our ten-minute set ended with a giant dogpile on me as people sang along to a song they'd just heard for the first time.

One bassist, three drummers, and five guitarists later, we're at the current line-up. This band has featured everyone from seasoned metalheads from big bands to total norms whose exposure to punk is limited to NOFX, from complete wasteoids that get dysfunctionally trashed at every show to clean-cut straightedge folks that are sober as a priest, from excellent musicians to those whose first experience playing an instrument was for this band. Each of these people have brought their own unique perspectives and influences to the band and helped it become the collective entity that it now is.



MRR: How was the recording process for the demo and how do you feel it was received? How did the "demo release tour" go? The demo was recorded in November 2008 and set a distinct standard that every Lotus Fucker recording since has followed and will continue to follow. The reception for the demo was far above and beyond what I expected. I had never been in a "popular" band before, and by that I mean a band that people actually cared about. So it really blew me away that people offered us records, tours, started writing me, etc. I felt good about the demo and to have people respond in kind was really satisfying.

Overall we made 400 copies of the demo between December 2008 and August 2009. They were made by request over that time, but by August I had concrete plans to do our LP so I decided it was time to retire the demo. Of those 400 copies, 55 were a special tour version given to friends and sold on the Merciless Game / Lotus Fucker / Chaos Destroy weekend excursion of December '08, an artistically important tour to me as it was my attempt to give some kind of real legitimacy to American raw punk after seeing lots of cool bands get swept up with much weaker elements of some weird Myspace crust trend and therefore discounted and rejected. I wanted to prove, even if only in a miniscule way to a small audience, that Americans could play raw and noisy hardcore punk on our own terms, in our own way, without being caught up in trends or blatant copying.

That tour was possibly the best tour I've ever done. We went from shorts-and-t-shirt weather to a below-freezing blizzard over the course of three days. Many people told me it was stupid to go from Baltimore to Columbia SC to Lexington KY to Grand Rapids MI, to play in small cities nine hours apart every day. They were all wrong. Every show was incredible, all three bands tore it up night after night, and playing with such great bands as Nuklear Blast Suntan helped build the bonds of a stronger and better East Coast scene for raw hardcore. Since that time Lotus Fucker's been touring pretty routinely, we've played with a lot of really killer bands, so in 2011 I plan on releasing a compilation LP titled *I Believe In Noise*, that highlights the great crop of raw punk bands and scenes from the East Coast. Keep your eyes open for it!

MRR: Lotus Fucker is the epitome of a DIY band, in that you book your own shows and tours, release your own records, etc... Is this a matter of principle or expedience? It's a little bit of both. Traditionally I've been extremely wary of letting anyone else tamper with my artistic vision or risk undercutting the material quality of what I'm creating. However, Lotus Fucker, to me, is very much a communal effort and an important aspect of the band is the network of friends attached to it. Thus, I always try to co-release all the Lotus Fucker stuff with another party, with someone I'm friends with. Our LP was a split release with R.S.R., the Wankys split EP is a split release with Katorga Works, and I have a few other labels in mind to help with other records we have planned.

But even "co-releasing" for me kinda means "give me half the cost of the release, let me work, and then I'll send you half the pressing when it's done." [*laughter*] At the end of the day, I walk a fine line between wanting to build relationships and friendships with those around me, but also wanting to keep the creative process and production process under my own direct control as much as possible.

While we tour fairly routinely, we don't play live very often locally. These days, maybe once every two months, excluding local shows involved in tours. We almost always play shows we book ourselves, mostly out of convenience. With the ever-rotating line-up, everyone's conflicting schedules, and the numerous other bands we're all involved in, it's difficult to get all of us in one room at the same time. Brian and I book shows routinely between Baltimore and DC, and of course we book bands we're friends with and want to play with, so we manage to wrangle the band together to play from time to time. Outside of that, it's difficult. We only practice an hour a week, if that, for whatever reason we are just the busiest people ever.

MRR: Speaking of booking shows, you've gigged up and down the East Coast. What are some of your favorite cities, venues, and memories so far? My favorite places to play are Lexington, KY and New Brunswick, NJ. Both these cities are my homes away from home. New Brunswick is only three hours away from DC so I try to go visit once a season, just to hang out, and Lotus Fucker goes up there routinely to play as well. We typically play Death Valley with my friends Silent Way, who are amazing Superchunk-meets-Husker Dü rock 'n' roll. I just recently released an LP for them and we'll do a Lotus Fucker/Silent Way split EP this fall.

Lexington is also very close to my heart. It's a great community of folks that I'm very close with. My favorite Lotus Fucker show yet was in Lexington on our above-mentioned December 2008 tour... A perfect night... Munashii from Ft Wayne, IN (another *great* scene/city that I love dearly) made the five-hour trek down to play with us, which added to the "assemblage of raw punkers from all over" vibes. There was a certain atmosphere and electricity to that night that's difficult to explain but I've never had so much fun at a show, it felt so at home and alive. Chaos Destroy covered my old band and the whole room went insane and sang along and I was getting teary, it felt like everything I'd dedicated myself to for the past few years had just been acknowledged and affirmed. Seeing ex-members of my old band sing along with a fist in the air, when I thought they looked back on our band with anger and disdain, resonated with me really hard.

For people keeping up with current zine culture, you can scope the amazing *Evil Minded* zine, issue #3, for an interview/transcribed conversation with me, Mike of Chaos Destroy, and Zach of Merciless Game, done after this specific show. Looking back, this was one of the best conversations I've ever had. The day after, all KY, IN, MD, MI, and DC friends scammed a couple hundred dollars of food from a Whole Foods hot bar, and then the MD, MI, and DC tri-fecta drove literally 90-100 mph for five hours and 80 mph for two hours through a heavy blizzard with zero visibility and cars crashing all around us in order to make our Grand Rapids, MI show. How we didn't get a speeding ticket, much less die, is a testament to the good karma we must have amassed over the years.

MRR: Each release has a very specific aesthetic. How important is that to the band and what is the significance of the anime imagery you use? Aesthetic is of primary importance to this band. Significant thought goes into every single aspect of our releases. The LP started an aesthetic that I plan on continuing with future releases. Each of the four panels of art done for the LP—front/back covers, front/back insert—was done by a different individual without any intercommunication and without any instruction beyond "please include this text ("Lotus Fucker" on the cover, a thanks list on the insert, etc)." Each individual was told to just do whatever they felt was appropriate. I think Lotus Fucker has very set and readily apparent themes and ideas, and what I sought were a variety of individual perspectives on these themes. Kind of a "what Lotus Fucker means to you" statement. I was blown away by the results, I thought they were all artistically amazing and fit our vibes perfectly while also being ideas that I would never have thought of myself.

I plan to continue this theme with all of our future releases, and I've got a variety of different visual artists with totally different styles lined up to work with. Again, this building of a collective Lotus Fucker entity, a network of friends, and relationships that extend beyond the immediate band itself and come to shape the idea known as "Lotus Fucker," is really important to me and central to the band. I'm trying not to have the same artists on multiple releases, but some folks; Izak, Ami Tuneless, Mike of Chaos Destroy immediately come to mind; just have such awesome styles that resonate with me so hard, so we'll see.

Our apparent anime influence is primarily derived from me personally. Anime is just as big to me as punk is. But I would say the "influence" is more just a coincidence of aesthetics and ideas. For example, the cover of the demo features a scene from the anime *Mushishi*—which is a *big* inspiration to me—where a blind girl becomes infected by a mushi and gains sight. The cover is the exact scene where the girl sees for the first time and is overwhelmed by the wide variety of sights in a forest. She reaches an epiphany of sorts, and is overjoyed to see the world as it is. Of course, problems arise later, but that's not the point. The point is finding the ability to see where you couldn't before, and both the wonderful and terrible things you find. It works with the title, a slide towards Rurouni Kenshin and his search for finding "an answer," finding a meaning, a purpose, a reason to continue. In this way, I realized that my answer was "bloodwashed noise," aka raw punk music. That is what I feel inside my heart, the format of my expression, the craft I seek to master. That is my answer.

MRR: Tell us a little about your songwriting and editing process. I know that the individual members of the band have very diverse taste in music, but the sound is pretty focused. How do you achieve that? While the band has traditionally had an *extremely* diverse taste in music, certainly aided by the fact that a relatively small number of "punks" have been through this band thus far, we've kept a focused sound because I'm writing almost all the music. The songwriting process is that a few times a year, in a burst of creative ambition, I pick up my two-stringed bass guitar and fiddle around until I find something I like, and then I work from there. While I sing in this band and play drums in two more, I can't play guitar and only barely play bass, so it's mostly by luck that I manage to write a good riff. And most of the stuff I do write, my bandmates improve upon, although ultimately I do all the arrangements myself. While I come up with good ideas from time to time, it's the people around me that make them better.

The original idea for this band was to be like Gauze, because they're the best band ever, mixed with shit-fi Euro hardcore a la Wretched, Siekiera, Shitlickers, Terveet Kädet, etc. etc., because that's what I like. Throw in some Lip Cream and noisy guitars, and you've got it. Even though I mostly listen to pop-punk and Japanese hardcore, this is the sound that comes naturally to me from a creative perspective. I think we've kinda moved beyond those specific ideas though, especially our newer songs, which play with repetition, drone, and dynamics in a manner that none of our specific influences ever touched upon. But ultimately Lotus Fucker's not supposed to be a genre exercise in one specific sound, merely its own unique perspective on punk.

Writing songs for Lotus Fucker is almost like piecing together a haiku for me. There's a specific

form that I want to follow, which I think is obvious from the LP. The LP is two different wholes on one record, *Answer=Bloodwashed Noise* and *The Island Closest to Heaven*, each whole being a cohesive unit constructed by different songs, each piece fitting together for a specific purpose, like a puzzle. When we play live, we play one of these wholes from start to finish, maybe throw some songs from our split EPs in the beginning or end, but it's unthinkable to me, for example, to cut a song out of *Answer=Bloodwashed Noise* and put it in the middle of *The Island Closest to Heaven*, or to just throw a random song in the middle of one of the sets...it's simply not supposed to be like that. Everything is carefully constructed for a purpose and to take anything out of context spoils the whole thing.

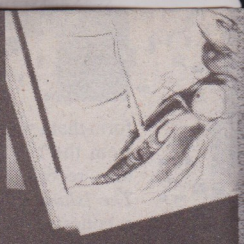
I know that's a weird way to view music, to write and perform it. But while some may find it bizarre and limiting, I find it immensely helpful and interesting. I love the idea of taking a form and playing with it, altering it, editing it, seeing how far I can push it, and ultimately transform it into what I want. Even if the same form is followed, each end result is unique if the inputs are different. The same thing can be viewed from many different angles, which is ultimately a fundamental aspect of Lotus Fucker, to take an idea and see it in many different ways.

So as it is, I tend to write complete "sets." Maybe more like movements, with different "songs," or parts of the movement, and these sets constitute the LPs, and other songs that don't fit so squarely into a set, that are more exercises in a specific idea, we put on split EPs, which I think is a great format for this band because it allows us to share a record with our friends, and friends is very important for this band... Even though we don't have a sizable discography yet, there's a fair amount in the works (another LP, split EPs with Silent Way and Penis Geyser, tracks for *I Believe In Noise* comp.) I've got all the songs for these written already, it's just a matter of working them out to our satisfaction, which is a time consuming process.

MRR: The recording process for the LP was fairly unique as opposed to the way most bands approach the studio. Tell us about the process and how you feel about the finished product. We recorded with my friends Audio Esoterica at the legendary Barclay House in Baltimore. The recording for the LP could not have been any smoother, easier, and more satisfying in any way. We got the entire thing recorded, mixed, and mastered in about 15 hours over four days, doing it in a "live in the studio" manner. We set up, leveled and mixed everything kinda on the spot, played the LP, and we were basically done. It was really simple. Mike and Nick from Audio Esoterica are the perfect recording team for Lotus Fucker and we'll never record with anyone else. They are sweet, funny, energetic, and probably more dedicated to this band than many actual members of the band have been. They come from a totally different background from me; they both play in a progressive metalcore band of sorts, typically record emo bands and acoustic stuff, and both worship Smashing Pumpkins, a band I can't stand. They have no experience whatsoever in "raw punk," "noise punk," "D-beat," etc. etc. This is why they are the best fit for us. Their outside perspective, their perception of how things should be (in terms of how they imagine my descriptions of how I want us to sound), play with and against my ideas about recording and sound really well, and together we come to a sound that perfectly captures what we want. I mixed and mastered the record myself with their invaluable help; the fact that they let me really take control of the situation and basically do whatever I want speaks volumes about their open-mindedness and ability to generate a sound that fits for any specific band. They are very "hands off," which is perfect for us. Maybe that sounds like how engineers should be, but I've definitely come across some that aren't like this. From a technical standpoint, Mike and Nick are fucking great sound engineers that understand what they're doing and how to do it. They've got nice equipment that's completely portable; they can record anywhere. I know this basically sounds like an advertisement...and maybe it is. [*laughter*] Mike and Nick prefer to record bands in a "live in the studio" setting, with everyone at once, basically like a band practice. I can't imagine recording any other way. My roommate's band went into a real studio, everyone played their instrument together and everything was pieced together, going back and fixing mistakes, audio splicing, etc. It's just insane to me...so tedious. In my opinion, if you can't nail your songs in two to three takes *max*, you're not ready to record, period. I can't imagine everyone recording one instrument at a time; it blows my mind. My mentality on this may be shaped for my general disdain for recording. In truth, I have little interest in recording or releasing records, and while there are certain aspects of it that are satisfying, I would be perfectly fine with never making another Lotus Fucker record and only playing live. Playing live is truly what I seek to master, what's interesting to me, and in my world, records are really only something to tour on, maybe a way to get your name out there so people will show up to your gig. That's why all our releases are generally lined up to tours. So if we can record in a manner that's close to playing live, that feels a lot more natural and interesting to me than really going through the slog of a traditional recording process. Overall, I've never been prouder of anything in my life than the Lotus Fucker LP. It is literally my dream come true. It was great to work with great friends like Sandro and Sven/R.S.R. in releasing it. Also, maximum respect to Tess and Dan the Cannibal of Dysphoria Distro, who make all our merch and are, to me, another extended part of this band.

MRR: You have two tours coming up this year. Tell us about how the tours with the Wankys and S-Explode came about and where you're going. Mark Wanky wrote me a few years ago, when Kamikaze Noise was still active, and we've kept in touch since that time. I *love* The Wankys, they are one of my favorite current bands, and Mark has always been a big fan of all the SPHC stuff (Chaos Destroy, Lotus Fucker, KxNx, etc). As friends and fans of each other's bands, to me, it just seemed inevitable that we would have to tour together. No way around it. So I talked Mark into bringing The Wankys to the US to tour with us. They'll do about a week through the northeast with Chaos Destroy, then a weekend straight down southeast and a week through the Midwest with Lotus Fucker. Their Baltimore show at Barclay House will be intersecting with the Slang/World Burns to Death east coast tour and this will probably be my favorite show of 2010. Also quite excited for our tour to intersect in DC with the tour of Suis La Lune and Fair Root. Suis La Lune are an amazing Swedish emo band, they played my old house years ago with Lotus Fucker and we had a great time together, particularly keen to play together again. For the tour, I'm releasing a Wankys/Lotus Fucker split tour EP, a Chaos Destroy LP (the world isn't ready for this), as well as doing 4 different shirt designs and a tour towel. A massive undertaking but I'm so excited I can't help myself!

Our planned tour with S-Explode in October is actually the work of my dear friend Mikey. When his old emo band Osceola toured Japan, they played some dates with S-Explode and they all hit it off really well, so Mikey's bringing them over here for a short tour with his band Fair Root and us. S-Explode is kinda weird jammed-out noise rock with squeaky Melt Banana-esque vocals. Fair Root is quiet, mellow pop music. We are who we are. So it's a very diverse and interesting tour. Unfortunately, because of time and logistical constraints, their one-week tour is basically going to DC; Richmond; Frederick, MD; Philadelphia; Baltimore; and New Brunswick. Still, will be fun! The plan is to have our split EP with Silent Way out for this tour. In addition to these tours, we're also doing a shorter excursion in April with Penis Geyser and working on a short Canadian tour later in the summer. Penis Geyser is, I think, the best band in the US right now, really excited to hit the road together. Next year, assuming all these tours go okay, I've got a few other things up my sleeve, assuming the stars align properly, so let's hope!!



pollution

Pollution spew sketchy vibes, bleak outlooks, and catastrophic sounds, and they somehow have mutated this mess into some of the best, catchiest, and most original hardcore being created today. Without taking their reputably devastating live show far beyond New York, they've turned heads across the country and overseas by simply releasing one demo after another of ugly, disturbing music that sounds like nothing else. Two of their tapes have since made it to vinyl and word has spread even further. Pollution answered some of my questions at their practice space in Brooklyn.

Interview by John Fahy. *Photos by William Butler and Corey Kittrell*

mrr: tell me your names and what you do in pollution.

Sean: Guitar
Ryan: Bass, vocals
Pat: Guitar
Elsner: Drums

mrr: give me a history of how the band came together and what, if any, bands you'd played in previously. was the name pollution chosen from the outset?

Sean: Yeah, that was pretty much what I had in my mind. I realized that there were already other Pollutions out there, but whatever, fuck it.

Ryan: There is never enough Pollution.

[Everyone concurs.]

Pat: I play in Villains right now.

Elsner: Aint Rights.

Ryan: I play in Unearthly Trance and The Howling Wind.

Sean: I'm just in Pollution.

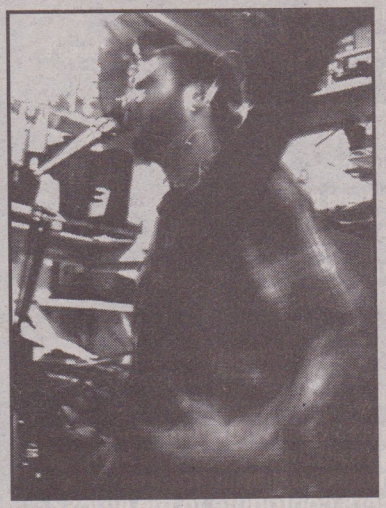
Ryan: Sean plays in Pollution only!

Sean: I wanted to start playing music again. I was seeing what Pat was up to and he was like, "Hey, Elsner plays drums." I also wanted to play with Ryan. I already had three songs and we just hung out in Pat's back yard and we had some drinks and headed to the space. After the three songs, we thought, "Yeah, this is definitely gonna work!"

Sean: I got off tour with one of my other bands, we were taking a break for a while. So I was looking to do something. I came down and these guys already had some songs written and were ready to go.

Pat: I think we had seven.

Ryan: I had picked up on their songs and written lyrics to their song titles and I pretty



much joined the band quickly. And that was that. And then we were formed.

Pat: Elsner learned to play one footed blasts wrong way!

Elsner: Oh yeah, I started off playing backwards. I knew I wanted to do something heavy.

mrr: sean, we'd talked about how pollution had been compared to bands like rorschach and born against, but how you were not really around for most of that era and were more likely influenced by bands that had come earlier. what do you think shaped the sound pollution has taken?

Sean: I'm not really sure. I was just always into Die Kreuzen and Later Flag; a lot of stuff out of from the Richmond, Virginia, area, like Honor Role and what not. Just stuff that didn't have a conventional sound. Like Power of the Spoken Word being one. I've just always gravitated towards bands like that. Rudimentary Peni. People that seem to create a sound, and not really go with a sound.

Ryan: Me and Pat are into Rorschach and Born Against.

Pat: I saw them a bunch in the early '90s.

Sean: Now that I've heard those bands, I do like what they are doing. I just wasn't buying hardcore records in the early to mid '90s. I just wasn't there at all.

Ryan: I think it has to do with where you lived and grew up.

Sean: No, those bands were coming through.

Ryan: I thought it might be a New York bands thing.

Sean: Nah, I was just buying fucking grunge records and Am Rep records. I was listening to the old hardcore still though and I hadn't totally dismissed it. I was just kind of out of the loop.

Elsner: That's what I was buying too.

Ryan: I think it's an age thing?

Sean: Could be an age thing. I had kind of gotten out of buying hardcore records and got into noisier things and louder bands and what not.

Pat: But as an influence absolutely not. Totally different ideas

Ryan: Only influence I hear is in the vocals—that I hear, maybe. Those kinds of New York bands, compared to other NYHC bands, was what I was more into back then. Not being so straight forward, and more abstract and almost sarcastic in the Born Against realm. That is where I hear any influence.

Elsner: That's what we were talking about. It was only about a couple of bands for me, I was just buying grungy shit back then.

Pat: I was just saying NO to grunge and listening to Born Against!

mrr: i've been told that all of the artwork on your releases comes from a friend's sketchbook. give me some background on that.

Sean: Ah, yeah, that's my good friend Greg Keul. I've known him since 7th grade. I think he moved to North Carolina in 1983. We just grew up together and lived together in college. He was just really kind of like prolific on the amount of sketches he was doing. He filled up 13 or 14 sketchbooks—8 x 10 black bound sketchbooks that you can get at the art store. He did that for about a year and decided he didn't want to do art anymore and threw them out and I grabbed seven or eight out of the garbage. He found four that I grabbed and threw 'em back out in the trash. The other three were in my car. I have had those things since '94. Long story short, I've always wanted to do a music project with him because he's pretty "out there" but he knows nothing about music. Once we got Pollution underway I kind of wanted to have this "look" to the band and thought it was a great way to get Greg involved in the band without him actually having to pick up an instrument. I just called him and he couldn't believe I still had those and he was like, yeah that's really great, go ahead!

Ryan: How much stuff do you still have?

Sean: Three sketchbooks.

Pat: We went through those things and put in a million stickies.

Sean: We have covers for records and tapes for the next 20 years probably!

mrr: you've released the nasty.dna and n.s. drugs demos on feast of tentacles records and desensitized records respectively, and now a live tape on vinyl rites. how did you get hooked up with these labels?

Pat: Feast of Tentacles because of Bromid from Battletorn. They were on a tour in Europe, and they had a record out on that label.

Sean: That guy Chris from FOT was looking to get in touch with us, and those guys were like, yeah we know them. The drummer of Battletorn is roommates with the drummer of Pollution. So we ended up contacting him and he was interested and he put out a great record with that one. The physical record itself came out killer!

Pat: And we gave Bromid a big chunk of change for hooking us up!

Sean: As for Desensitized, we played a show at ABC No Rio with Loser Life, who I fucking love what they are doing and I was like, "We got to get hooked up on this show." Adam was doing the merch for Loser Life and he liked what we were doing. And Daniel [Vinyl Rites] was playing bass with Loser Life on that tour.

Pat: Hail Loser Life! They were one of the coolest bands that we played with.

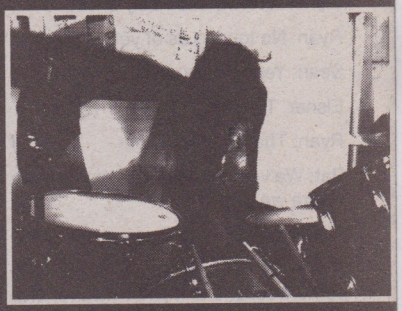
Sean: Steven rules. Yeah, they basically both got in touch with us for wanting to put that stuff out.

Elsner: We still owe Omid.

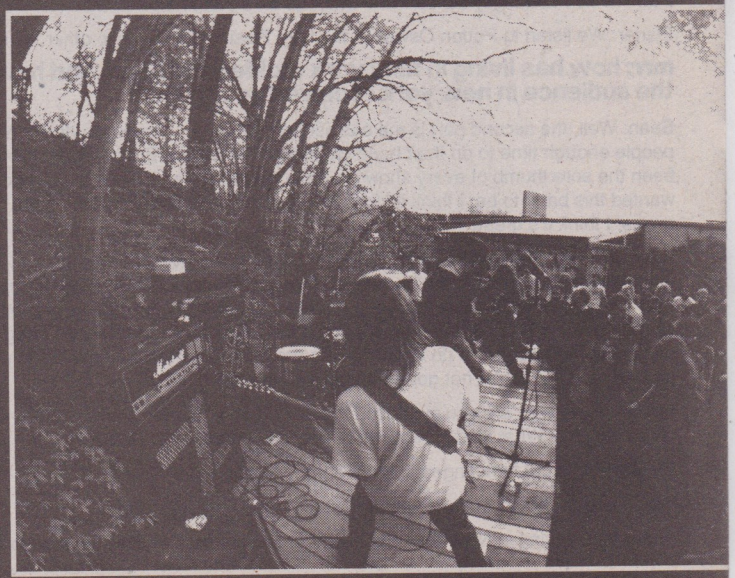
mrr:the live tape includes studio recordings of "the crazy girl" by black flag, "familar & plain" by honor role, and the n.s. drugs demo included a cover of "downer" by lush. how did you pick the covers for these releases?

Sean: (laughing) Jeez.

Ryan: I could answer the Black Flag one. It was originally supposed to be on a Black Flag compilation tape, which may or may not come out still. That was the original reason we recorded it and it was just hanging out forever. So we decided to do something with it. And the other covers were just Sean's suggestions, really.



Sean: I've always wanted to do an Honor Role cover, but I would say 99% of any Honor Role song is pretty uncoverable. I mean, you can't just get the feel that Pen Rollings playing has. You go through those songs and just sounds stupid even trying. But "Familiar &



Plain" is pretty open and is the only song anybody could maybe do. I've always shot for things outside, even Lush. We are in this band Pollution and I like this band Lush—let's just go for it!

Pat: It was the hardest cover! Out of all three by far!

Ryan: It was a challenge.

Pat: I fucked that one up for years.

Sean: The cover songs were songs I've always wanted to do and I figured this was the right project and the guys I was playing with could pull it off.

Ryan: And the Black Flag song we play live, people don't even recognize so it's good enough.

Pat: Everyone has Black Flag tattoos.

Sean: But no one listens to the records. Somehow the Black Flag cover really goes over people's heads at shows. No one knows what the fuck song that one is.

mrr: what touring has the band done? are there any plans for future tours?

Elsner: We went to Philly once.

Ryan: No touring as of yet.

Sean: Yeah, Philly.

Elsner: That's it.

Ryan: That's hardly a tour.

Pat: We've been to Philly. We've been to Manhattan. It's right over the bridge from where we live!

Elsner: We went to Queens once too.

Ryan: We don't have a vehicle to tour, but I think there are possibilities for doing some weekend shit and whatever else kinda comes up. Mostly East Coast right now until we can figure out a way to do anything else.

Pat: We do have a guy called Fade who has a van and helps us out.

Elsner: We listen to Patton Oswalt in the van. Pissing our pants to other towns.

mrr: how has living in new york molded the band, and how has the audience in new york received you so far?

Sean: Well, the second part is the easiest part. I dunno…maybe we don't give people enough time to do their hand clapping or whatever. But seriously, we have been the sore thumb of every show we have played so far. But it's exactly how I wanted this band to be. I think it kinda works. There are some cricket chirps between songs. I think it's great!

Ryan: The set's so fast that it kinda just knocks people over their heads and it doesn't even give people the chance to really get into it or do anything. It's just a 15-17 minute blast of a live set with no brakes in between. No talking, no nothing. And we'd rather see the reaction of people after we are done. We don't need crowd participation or people to do anything. We are here to create our music and play it and we're done. We're not gonna waste people's time.

Elsner: Yeah, how are you supposed to react when you have a cinder block dropped on your head? What kinda reaction are you going to get from that?

Ryan: People put their fingers in their ears occasionally.

Pat: There is photographic documentation of that! Fingers in ears.

Ryan: As for living in New York and how that shapes us, I've lived in New York my whole life, so it's shaped me 100%.

Sean: I've only been here for ten years. I don't know. It doesn't shape me and my music literally.

Ryan: Only way I can see is that you guys live in the same neighborhood in Brooklyn. Apartments are in walking distance.

Elsner: We're always hangin.

Ryan: It's not a New York band thing.

Sean: I just happen to be in New York.

Pat: The locale thing is true and listening to records way before the band. Having enough stuff in common and enough middle finger.

Ryan: I think we all have a similar attitude about the music scene around here, so that was a definite common bond to be playing with these guys. The attitude behind it is right up my alley.

mrr: the lyrics seem to deal with either personal despair, or coming from an outlook outraged at, and yet also resigned to, a dismal future of the world. do all members contribute to the lyrics? tell me what thoughts bring all of this about.

Sean: Oh, cool, I can go to the bathroom for a minute.

Ryan: I write most of the lyrics. Occasionally, someone else brings down stuff that I will chop up to fit a song. Yeah, it's a dismal outlook. It's just reflective of what is going on and what we see. Pollution is the influence of some of the stuff that I write about. But it's also very personal. It's not really meant to be conveyed in any way as a message. It is just random thoughts that connect with the feel of the music. The hostility is just natural for the kind of music I like and it's just reflective in what we are playing. There is no real message to anything. If anything, it's the irony in it all. That everything is fucked and people still don't give a shit. So who cares?

Elsner: Yup. I don't really care.

Ryan: There are things that are thrown in there that I'd rather people come across than spell out anything. A lot of references to certain things I'd rather people read the lyrics, but no one reads lyrics anymore anyway. I don't need to go any further. A bit negative?

mrr: what does the band have coming up next? i hear there is new material in the works do you have a firm plan of what releases you'll put out next?

Sean: Newer material, I would like to see it on 12" again. Personally, up until just recently, I've never been one to buy 7"s much. I've always just liked the large record. Seems to fit in my sequence of things much better.

Elsner: Fits in your tote bag

Sean: I really enjoy hearing eight songs at 45 rpms on a 12". Four songs on each side. I just think that is the best optimal thing.

Ryan. We have seven new songs. That will be recorded sometime in the near future. Possibly more.

Sean: I would like this one out by the summer. Right now tentative title is *Registered Smut*. There might be a tape first.

Ryan: There may or may not be a tape first. Followed by a vinyl release.

Sean: That's how we do our thing. Tape first, then vinyl.

Ryan: The first tape was all we could do, now we have the option to think about vinyl ahead of time.

Pat: Go straight for the jugular. The 12" jugular. We don't say "word" to nobody.

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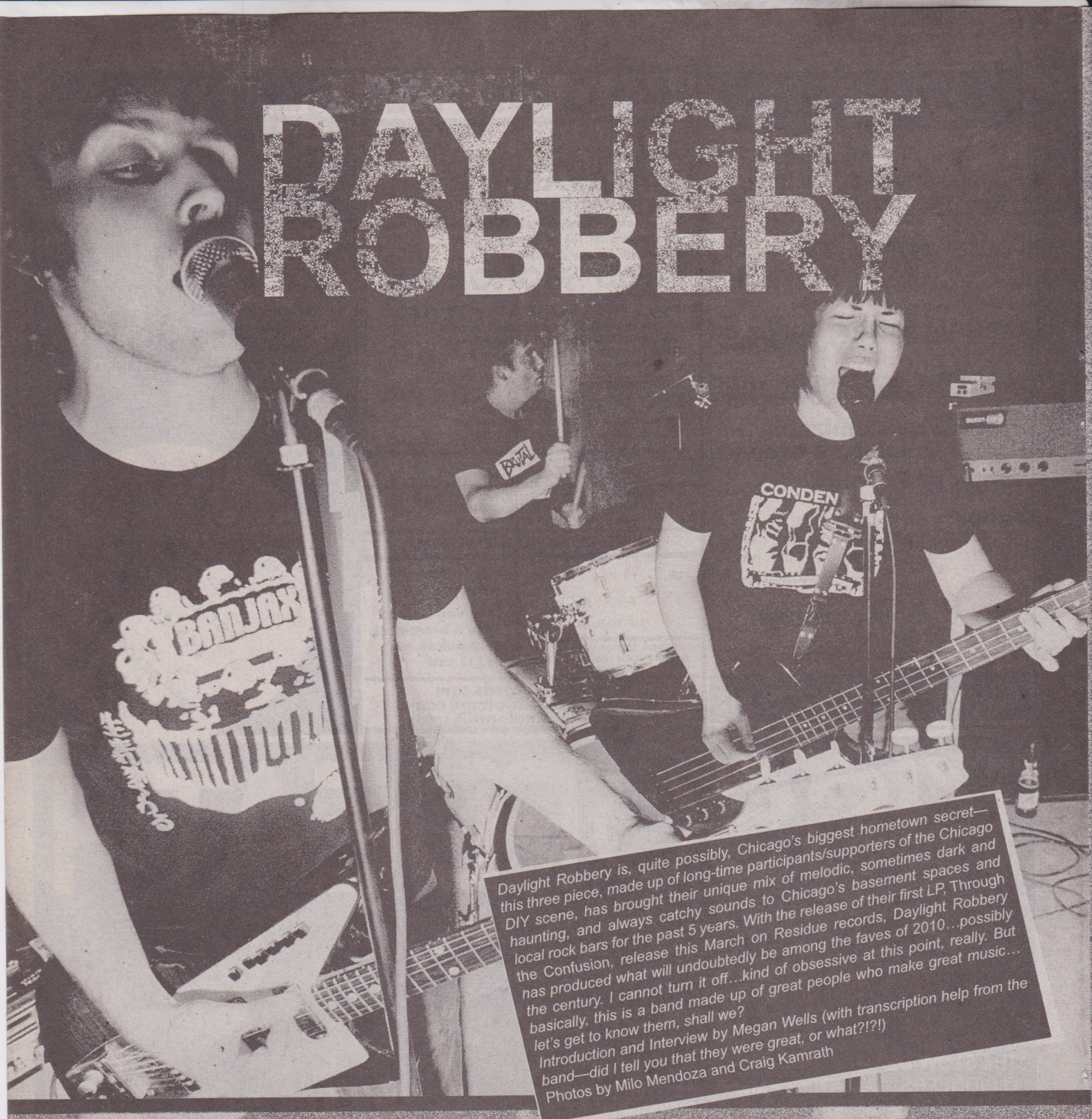
DAYLIGHT ROBBERY



Daylight Robbery is, quite possibly, Chicago's biggest hometown secret—this three piece, made up of long-time participants/supporters of the Chicago DIY scene, has brought their unique mix of melodic, sometimes dark and haunting, and always catchy sounds to Chicago's basement spaces and local rock bars for the past 5 years. With the release of their first LP, Through the Confusion, release this March on Residue records, Daylight Robbery has produced what will undoubtedly be among the faves of 2010…possibly the century. I cannot turn it off…kind of obsessive at this point, really. But basically, this is a band made up of great people who make great music… let's get to know them, shall we?

Introduction and Interview by Megan Wells (with transcription help from the band—did I tell you that they were great, or what?!?!)

Photos by Milo Mendoza and Craig Kamrath

MRR: Hello.
BAND: Hello.

MRR: So I think we should do the obligatory band name, instrument, and zodiac sign introduction.
David: Well, I'm David. I play guitar and sing.
Jeff: I'm Jeff. I play guitar. No I don't. Just kidding. I play drums and I'm a Cancer, but right on the cusp of Leo though.
Christine: My name's Christine and I play bass and do vocals. I'm an Aries on the Pisces cusp.

MRR: Oh wow. Are you a cusp, David?
David: I am totally a cusp. I'm a Libra Scorpio cusp.
Christine: Wow, a band of cusps.
David: I don't know anything about that stuff.
Jeff: Let's get this man an astrologist ASAP otherwise this interview can't go on. Your answers will be completely off.
Christine: What do the stars say…

MRR: Let's talk about Daylight Robbery's story. What inspires you guys, how did you begin? Let's put some stages on it and bring Jeff into it…Eventually.
Jeff: Spinal tap drummer.

MRR: That was my next question.
Jeff: There have been two people that have exploded.

David: Whoa that's two Spinal Tap references in this interview and we haven't even answered the first question.
Christine: David and I started writing songs and demo-ing them right after we started hanging out. About six months later we started playing with Trash, from Condenada.
David: This was like in 2005. Maybe 2006?
Christine: No it was like 4 years ago maybe? I don't know. Anyways, a long time ago. We played with Trash for about a year. Maybe? Not even a year? And then she moved to Seattle.
David: She moved away and moved back a month or two later.
Christine: So she moved away and we were sad because she is a pretty rad drummer, and we all got along really well. Then we started playing with John Trask and that lasted about a year as well. We went on tour with him and released one 7". And then he had to move back to Maine.
David: At that point we didn't really know what was going to happen. It was a little bit messier transitioning John out of the band. You just have that moment when you're like, is it worth continuing this or should you restructure it? Think about a new band and start over.

MRR: Like change names or something like that?
CHIRSTINE: Yeah. It just seemed like something wasn't working. Since we were on our second drummer and he was moving away and at the time there was a lot of drama and it just became more stressful than we ever wanted it to be so we weren't sure. Me, more so than David. I just wasn't sure about continuing.
David: Then I called Jeff.
Christine: Yeah, then Jeff came into the picture and it really did change everything.

MRR: Did he brighten your day?
Christine: He did.
Jeff: It's because of all these energy drinks.
Christine: And his sunny personality and punctuality.
David: Detail oriented.
Christine: He's a responsible human being. He knows how to use a phone.
Jeff: And I drink these beverages that have cross promotions with Doritos.

MRR: Are you trying to plug a product here?
Christine: So far it's been over a year and Jeff hasn't told us he's moving away yet. So, so far so good.

MRR: Any plans to move, Jeff?
Jeff: No, I already did my move away from Chicago and move back thing. I got that out of my system. I'm in Chicago for good.

MRR: So at what point did you guys dress up like members of Spinal Tap?
Christine: Oh, that was not a band related thing. That was our joint awesome Halloween costume one year.

MRR: So who was David St. Hubbins?
David: Neither was David St Hubbins. I played Nigel Tufnel.

MRR: Played?
David: I mean I embodied Nigel.
Christine: I was Derek Smalls. Complete with cucumber in the pants.

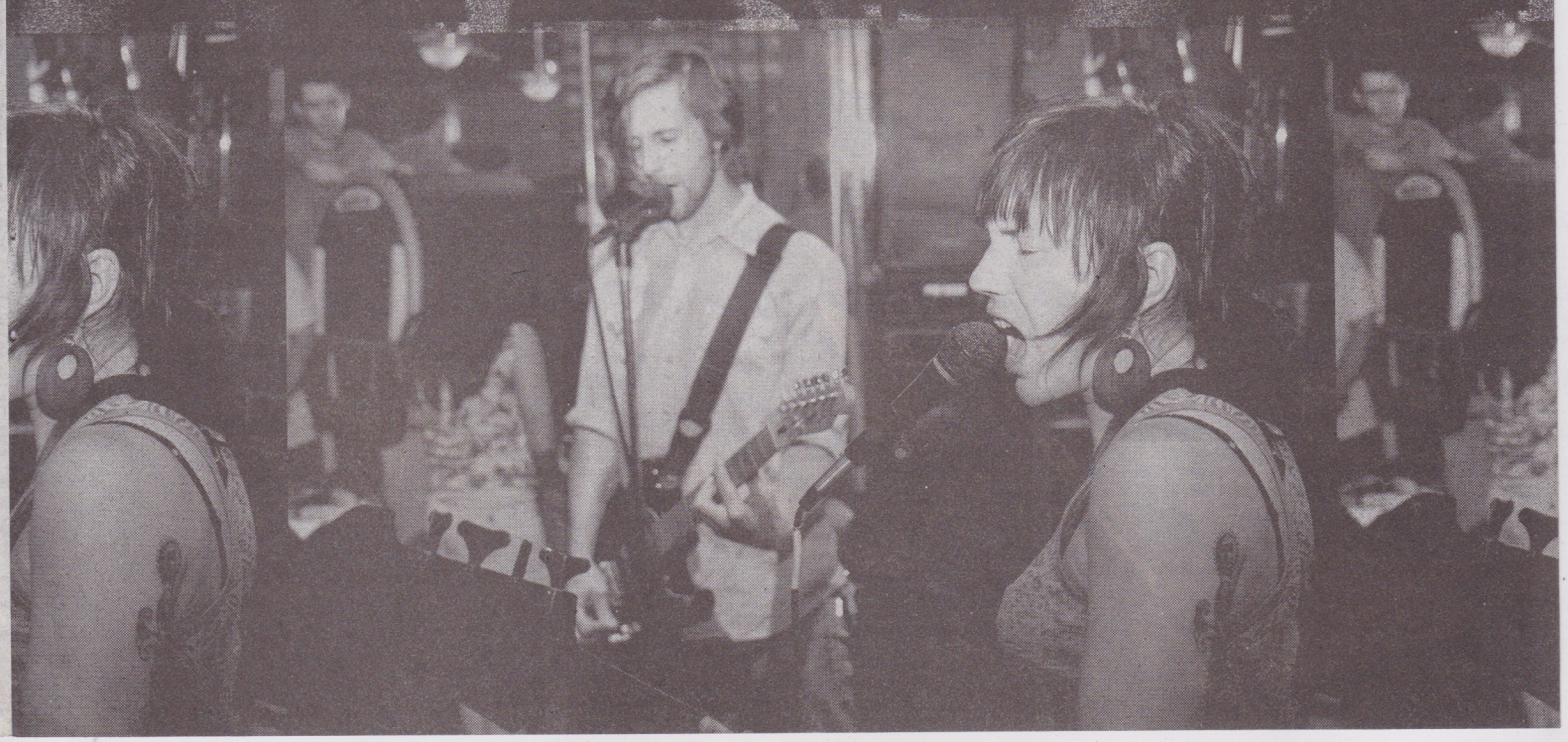
MRR: So that has nothing to do with the band...
Jeff: Well as far as Spinal Tap goes, I think that every day is Halloween for me. I always feel like Nigel.

MRR: It's a Nigel kind of day.
Jeff: Yeah.

MRR: Let's talk about how Daylight Robbery fits into the prolific Chicago scene. Where do you see yourselves...have you seen any shifts in that? Where do you guys feel comfortable?
Jeff: I don't know, I feel like we are sort of jack-of-all-trades with the Chicago scene, I feel like we can play with bands like Ultratumbados, a lot of touring bands, a lot of different ones. We also play a fair amount of garage rock shows, too so, it's hard to say really.
Christine: Yeah, I don't feel like we kind of fit in anywhere. That's kind of why we're able to play different kinds of shows. I really like that about us, that we've had opportunities to play in different scenes and feel, not at home, but welcomed.
David: It's not that we don't fit in anywhere, it's that we fit in everywhere.
Christine: Well yeah, but we've definitely played shows where we're like, why are we on this bill? But it comes apparent as the show goes on, but then you're like, what?
Jeff: Yeah, we've played crust core shows before. We've played with La Armada before, I remember, and that's pretty 180• musically from where we're at.
Christine: And going into a show like that you feel like, man, nobody's going to fucking give a shit about us.

MRR: And what kind of reaction do you get?
Jeff: I feel like when we play with a band that sounds like Celtic Frost or something, we get a better response than when we play with bands that sound more like us. The more metal or more like D-beat a band is, the more their fans like us, compared to some of the other bands we play with that sound more like us, you know?
[Laughter]
Christine: That doesn't make any sense...
Jeff: Yeah, it's weird how that works out.

MRR: I like that you brought up Celtic Frost as your reference point.
David: I mean...Jeff just as much as we, our previous bands [David: Audience of the End, Systemic Infection, Dead Reckoning, Pedestrians; Christine: Manhandlers; Jeff: Kathode, .Nema, Ottawa, Calvary, Dearborn



SS, Punch in the Face] and our social spheres, all like the DIY hardcore scene, so our records are on Residue, which is pretty much a hardcore label for what it's worth, and that seems like those are our people, but whatever that means… I should stop.

MRR: Along that line, what kinds of bands or shows inspire you now?

Jeff: I don't know, lately I've been into playing with our friends' bands, I don't know why. I think that show with Manipulation, even though we don't really sound anything like Manipulation, it was a lot of fun going to St. Louis and playing with them. We got a good response down there too. Maybe just getting older and having played a couple hundred shows or whatever, you start to find that it's more fun to just hang out with people when you play with your friends, than it is to necessarily have a great fan response or anything like that.

Christine: Yeah, I mean, I agree with Jeff in that I feel fortunate that we've been able to play a lot of really amazing shows, and many of those bands that we play with are people that we know, or bands that we just admire and they're on tour. I guess I'm just inspired by things that are happening here and the bands that have been around forever, and then some of the new stuff that's happening.

MRR: So David and Christine are a couple…

Christine: Shut UP! You just blew our cover.

MRR: We can take this question out if you don't like it. Umm, so you're a couple so I was just wondering how, with being in a band together, the domestic and the creative come together…Are you guys like making chili, and then all of a sudden one of you says, "I've got a riff!" Or what? I'm just curious about that creative process and then how you bring Jeff in, how living together affects the whole process…

Christine: Well David has riffs pouring out of him.

[Laughter]

David: Not always!

Christine: I can't always keep up with the riffs that come with the whole package of David Wolf.

MRR: Your riffs are too strong!

Christine: Umm yeah, you can strike that. Anyways, it's very convenient, in a lot of ways, because we can practice at home, and we'll come up with a song, or parts of a song, and we can work on it together or independently, like we've kind of done it various different ways. We've worked on songs together, all three of us, too, and each contributed ideas. So there's no set way as to how we come up with stuff. But I think definitely being around each other, and living together, is an advantage to writing together and stuff.

David: Yeah, for sure. But I feel like lately, we've had more than ever been able to kind of develop ideas as a trio.

Christine: Yeah.

Jeff: It used to be I would just show up to practice and there would be a song and I'd play it. Like with any band, after a while, you get more comfortable with playing with new people and you just end up coming up with stuff, like there will be maybe an idea you start with, and then it develops into something a little bit different by the end of each practice till it's finally done. I think some of our better songs, lately, songs that I like, "Ignominious Defeat," started out kind of a crappy song when it started, it was almost kind of emo when it started, it sounded like a Lungfish song, and uhh…

[Laughter]

Jeff: Now it's…

Christine: I like Lungfish!

Jeff: I like Lungfish, but it's not really our… nothing we can pull off without sounding like goobers, you know. But then it turned out to be this really good, catchy punk rock song, within a couple weeks, you know, when it started out being a totally out-of-character song for us, and I'm kind of glad it went where it went.

David: I do think of, I do dream up a lot of stuff, and a lot of it is riding my bike to work, I'll play loops in my head or whatever, and I don't know if that's normal or not, but a lot of it sounds good in my head and then I'll play it for the band, or play it for Christine, and everyone will kind of go, yeah, we can try that… A lot of times it will have to undergo some kind of radical change, like what Jeff was describing with that song, where I had sort of seen it as like a slow, noodly song, and it sounded great in my head, but it didn't sound so great when we actually played it.

Jeff: Basically the same chords ended up being there…

Christine: Yeah. And then there have been songs you've written completely that… you'll show up and have a whole song with lyrics.

MRR: Well, how do DIY ethics influence you each outside of creating music? Are there other aspects of DIY culture that you're interested in, or that affect your life/ lifestyle?

Christine: I think a lot of the ethics, or whatever you would want to call them, that relate to music kind of translates to how we, David or I, I don't want to speak for everybody, how we live our lives, you know—that we try to just, like our music, do things on our own terms. As we get older or do things like getting married and buying houses, or whatever, facing these kind of things that all of a sudden feel really adult, we are trying to navigate through life and do it in a way that doesn't feel like we're compromising what we believe in or how we want to live our life. It's not always easy, but I think that having that foundation has helped me to kind of figure other things out. That's kind of a vague answer.

David: I've started to feel like DIY is more interesting when you sort of broaden it to be more about a community that can kind of serve itself, than just insisting that you individually make everything, or are in charge of every level of something. But, just to bring it back to the band, it seems like there's been this really strong reinforcement in the past couple of years, with like, bands that we know, bands that mainly work with Residue records or like some of the other labels, SouthKore, other labels in town, working with a consistent set of engineers and studios, and artists for the cover art, the labels and all that stuff, just kind of… it sort of mirrors what happens in big labels and everything, but it's still very self-contained. And the scope, everyone pays attention to the scope, like no one would ever… Everyone trusts each other to not attempt to sort of jump out of that system and turn it into something where it's like a big profit venture or…

Jeff: I think if you look at our, at this record [*Through the Confusion*] that we just did, I mean short of going out and drilling for our own oil,

and starting our own petro-chemical company to make vinyl or something, short of doing that we did work entirely either with ourselves or people that we know. Like, Brendan [Sullivan], he did the art, Jordan [Atkins, Residue Records] is putting out the record, Kris [Poulin], he recorded it, so yeah we didn't really step outside of our set of friends who are all doing things completely on their own.
Christine: And some of those people are doing it for a living.
Jeff: Yeah like Kris, for example.

MRR: Yeah do you guys want to talk about the recording process for the LP and maybe some things you did there that were fun?
David: I love recording. It's like, I love playing shows and everything, but I love making records. I really just love everything about it. I get goofy.
Christine: You like to record things, too. I think
David: Yeah, I like the technology and all the sort of fussy, nerdy details of it, but also, I just love experimenting with all the options. The options are great and it's great to limit yourself too, but I really geek out on trying different settings for different songs, you know, or changing for guitar overdubs and stuff like that.
Jeff: I love everything about recording except actually playing the songs. [Laughter]
Jeff: I feel like I am under a microscope. I mean if I could just be someone who bands brought in to advise them or something
David: A producer? You want to be a producer?
Jeff: But the only time I am in a studio I'm always playing and I don't get to spend nearly as much time with the stuff that I like about recording. I love mixing, stuff like that. I feel like with this album, we put more effort, we could have done a lot more I think, but we put a lot more effort into this album than I have ever put into any recording. I mean we spent five days on it, like the other LPs I've done were two days. I think it turned out pretty good, but if we had unlimited time and budget I think we could have easily spent twice as much time on it, and been totally happy, especially if it had been spread out, over some time. It's difficult, and frustrating but I am pretty happy with how it came out.
Christine: My favorite part was ordering Charlie Thai and Sultan's [local Chicago cuisine] every day.
[Laughter]
David: Kris's studio has kind of a momentum. There are some rituals to it. I don't know if other bands that record there do the same thing.
Jeff: When Punch in the Face recorded with him, we did the exact same thing.
David: It's like you work from 10 to 3 or 11 to 3, then you order from like one of 4 or 5 places. And then you eat and you work from 4 to 10.
Jeff: I don't know how Kris does this, because he could charge a good amount more than he does. That's what is so funny is that, in the last eight years—since, really the last time I recorded with anybody else was eight years ago—the last eight years I only recorded with Kris. That's kind of crazy. For about four different bands.
Christine: He really makes you sound like you. He's a good listener, and he's very patient, and, he's just… yeah. We've recorded all three records with him, and he's done a good job.

MRR: I wondered if you [David] made any of the amps that you played on… or did you use any kind of contraptions, something that you made?
Jeff: I think you did on the album, yeah.
David: I did make an amp that I used to record with. And it makes an appearance in every song on the record.

MRR: Oh! Nice.
David: Trying to mix it up a little bit.

MRR: Who writes the lyrics? And maybe it's more than one person, I am assuming… And how do you decide, for example, who's going to sing what part, and things like that?
Christine: We both write lyrics. I dunno, generally it just depends on the song. "Ignominious Defeat" is a good example, where it was just David singing, and we played around with it a lot and just couldn't quite figure out how to handle it, and for the first time ever we were like, "Why don't we both just sing the whole song?" And it worked! So it's just trial and error. Let's see what David says, but that's my point of view. But sometimes, it just depends on who wrote it, and you know, you might think well, I thought you could sing this part, or I thought I'd sing this whole song, or... It's pretty open.
Jeff: I don't write any lyrics. I'm saving all my lyrics for a Broadway musical about Rod Blagojevich.

MRR: Oh Wow! What is the title of your musical going to be?
Jeff: Probably something about his hair.
Christine: Blago!

MRR: So it sounds like both of you write lyrics, is that true?
David: Sure is.
Christine: And how do we decide who sings what? I just said it kind of depends on…
David: Yeah it's funny cos there's songs that I've written every scratch, every single word of the lyrics, but Christine sings them, and vice versa. I don't know if there's a song that you've [to Christine] written the lyrics to that I have sung?
Christine: I usually sing the songs that I write, but there are songs I've written that we both sing on, but generally I sing the ones that I write.
David: Most of the time, the words will come together, they're pretty rough to start. They're written with the assumption that the phrasing will work one way, and it really doesn't pan out. But then the parts where we sing together or sing over each other, those usually take a while to work out, and usually it's pretty choppy at the beginning.
Christine: Yeah.
David: But we'll decide how to break that stuff up depending on once we know how the song is going to work, the rhythm of it, once we sort of nail down more of the parts, cos sometimes we have had ideas that we have had to scrap cos we couldn't physically perform it. Or we've had to simplify.

MRR: Like losing your breath kind of stuff?
David: Well there's that, but there are certain things, I'm trying to think of an example…
Jeff: The rhythm of the guitars is too different from the vocals.
Christine: "Victim of the Late World" is a good example.
Christine: Like where I just couldn't… I've also never sung and played an instrument in a band before, and that is sometimes can throw me off. And that song, I just had to simplify it.

MRR: It's only you singing that one, right?
Christine: Yeah, and I just couldn't do it because I was doing it the same way all throughout and it was too…
David: Too many notes.
Christine: Too many notes, and singing the rhythm that you're playing bothers me a lot, I don't like that. And I was having a hard time with that.
Jeff: Yeah we switched the beat entirely to 4/4 during the parts where you sing. The weirder rhythm was making that impossible.

MRR: What inspired the songs "White Sheets in the Street" or "Victim of the Late World" on the new album?
Christine: I can tell you, cos I wrote both of those. "White Sheets in the Street" is kind of a story—a lot of the songs that I write and that we both write are about things that we see or experience in our neighborhood. I was just riding my bike home one day from work. And I saw a dead body in the street. And it really affected me, as of course it would affect anybody. This woman was crossing the street in Pilsen, and she got hit by a car, hit and run, and then she got hit by a bus!

MRR: Oh my god.
Christine: And I didn't know that at the time, I figured it was a bus because there was a bus parked 20 feet away, but yeah I had never seen anything like that. I remember standing there, and thinking I should walk away, right now, but I just can't. They were lifting the sheet up. It was just an image that stuck in my head. I remember coming home and trying to find information—who is this person? This could have been somebody I knew that live around there. You know, it could have been a friend of mine or something. It wasn't, it was a woman I didn't know. But they didn't really tell you much about her other than her name. It just kind of made me wonder who she was, and what her day was like leading up to that moment. So, that's what that song is about. And "Victim of the Late World", is quite simply about hating your job. And I guess at the time when I wrote it… you know when you are a creative person, and you take on a job that is creative, it kind of takes some of the joy out of that art or craft. Dealing with that and just like working a job that sometimes you feel like you just don't matter, and how do you deal with that. That song is about my frustration with that scenario. Which I think many people can relate to.

MRR: David—you want to talk about some lyrics you wrote for the LP?
Christine: Or do you have any insight into either of those, how you interpret it, I don't know. That's how I see it, but you know, sometimes you have a different point of view.
David: Neither of us writes with metaphors in mind. I think they're oblique, but they're about actual things or they're trying to sort of describe abstract things like funny situations or things that don't quite add up or make sense, but real things that have real impact on our lives.

MRR: You have both mentioned neighborhood things.
David: Yeah a lot of the songs have been, even on the previous records have been about weird neighbors, or just kind of like how confrontational city life can be? And how stressful it can be, you know. And, I don't know it seems like…
Christine: How you have no control.
David: Yeah it boils down to like the classic punk you know, lyric fodder of uh…
Jeff: Except now that you're 30 it's not about your parents or your teachers or the "cops"…
Christine: No, it's about your life.
Jeff: It's about your neighbors or your boss!

MRR: Yeah…
David: Or strangers. I mean lot of it is about strangers. I don't know. I've always kind of hated punk songs that have talked about concepts, you know? It's also such a weird trap to get into like, narrative in songs. There are so many crappy songs out there that like…
Jeff: Are you saying that "Property is Theft" by TSOL is not a great song?

[Laughter]

Christine: I quit!
Jeff: Or "Abolish Government?"
David: It's hard to write a song that's about something, like that's about an actual person, event, or whatever, that doesn't sort of come off as like a ballad, sort of a cheesy…

MRR: Jack and Diane!
David: Nothing against that song either, really…
Jeff: Mellencamp speaks the truth about the Midwest.
[Laughter]
David: And a lot of the shit that I listened to growing up was classic rock, or Springsteen, stuff like that, that has a really strong story component to the songs. But you know, it's a total trap. There have even been times where I've started to write lyrics to songs that have included fictitious… like giving names to people, and Christine was like, No way!
[Laughter]
David: There's a song, "Rerun" on the record, that I think originally the lyrics, in the very early stages, where like…
Christine: Johnny!
David: It wasn't Johnny! But it was some… yeah, I am so glad that didn't happen.
Jeff: We're not going to cover "Johnny hit and Run Pauline?"
David: Which is a great song, like X is a band that I personally think managed to do that pretty well.

MRR: And you guys are often compared to them [X]. Do you guys mind that comparison?
Jeff: What's that last song on *Under the Big Black Sun*? The song about "Drink at the bar nothing bar…"? What's that called… "Dawn comes soon enough for the working class?" I forget the name of that song.
Christine: Oh yeah!
Jeff: It's just a song about a bar with a cast of characters. And they do that really well, but it gets corny.
Christine: You know whenever I write lyrics, and this probably isn't interesting to other people, but like, we're getting self-indulgent now…
[Laughter]
Christine: I always feel like the lyrics that I write are too simple, and like I am writing too much about how I feel? And maybe I should be writing about something outside of myself. You know? But I just can't. I don't know how to do that. And I don't know how to write it in a sincere way. All I can write about is what I experience and know, or think I know. But I always feel like my lyrics are like a third grader wrote them! Really stripped down and simple.
Jeff: I really don't know how I would write lyrics now. I mean, I used to and I would write political lyrics. And I don't think I could do that without feeling corny at this point in my life. Not that I don't care, not that I don't think the same way that I did, you know similarly to when I was 21 or 22, I am just so hyper-critical of lyrics now, that I don't know how I would even approach them… that's why I don't sing for a band.
David: Lyrics are the hardest part of a band.

MRR: It's a common struggle for a lot of bands, so it's nice to hear what you guys think about it. I have a question for Jeff. Do your students know you play music?
Jeff: A few of them have figured it out that's because one of my co-workers came to see one of our shows at Ronny's, and she kind of has a big mouth. Then a couple of kids heard about it from her and then spread it around. But I don't think it's as well known now.

MRR: Like a generation of kids knew?
Jeff: Yeah. Last year I went to a show, it was at like 22nd and Pulaski, there was a warehouse building over there and Stations from Philadelphia were playing.

MRR: Fort Kakalak I think.
Jeff: It was actually a squat I think. They had tents set up in there.
Christine: Which never happens in Chicago.
David: I don't think it was a squat I think it was an actual rental, but it was squat-like.
Jeff: Anyway, I ran into four of my students there and luckily they had all graduated at that point, and I didn't have any power over them. But yeah it was kind of weird but one of my students was Tito from Reaccion's cousin, I believe.

MRR: Oh, George?
Jeff: Yeah, George.

MRR: George has come out to a bunch of shows.
Jeff: Yeah I have seen him at a bunch of shows. He was one of the first students I had when I first got there. That was like two years ago.
David: I taught one class at UIC and there was this person that was a student of mine that I would see at shows. We're cool now, but she was absolutely mortified that we ran into each other at the Albion house or something and she didn't want anything to do with it.

MRR: Because you were currently her teacher?
David: She was no longer a student of mine. I don't do much teaching, so it's not like I get that very often.

MRR: It's like the third wall or something had broke for her.
David: Like I said I feel like time has passed and it's not a big deal, but it was kind of funny at first. And I went right up to her and said hey, and she didn't even want to look at me.
Jeff: Yeah, I have never had that reaction in all of my teaching years.
David: I couldn't tell if it was me or if the situation was just embarrassing. I hope the latter.
Jeff: Yeah, I think also this school year I also have fewer kids who are into punk rock. Off the top of my head I can't even think of any in my classes right now. Where as last year I had probably four or five at the beginning of the school year, who were all going to DIY hardcore shows pretty regularly. So yeah, that was pretty weird and they all knew what band I was in.

MRR: Those were all my questions but I thought we could maybe talk about your records that are available and how people can get them and how you guys like to communicate with people…all that contact stuff.
Jeff: I think both our records are still, the ones that are out at this moment, are both still available from Residue and are probably available through many vinyl emporiums.
David: Jordan is good at distributing in Europe and South America and Japan.
Christine: And you can always contact Residue Records. We have the MySpace and we have the band camp website.
Jeff: Actually I encourage people to check out daylightrobbery.bandcamp.com. Is that it?
David: Yeah.
Christine: There is a boy band called Daylight Robbery in California.
David: There is like five Daylight Robberies.
Jeff: There is a Daylight Robbery in the UK I believe.

MRR: Isn't there a movie?
David: There is a movie yeah, but if you go to YouTube there is a pretty awesome high school band in a talent show called Daylight Robbery and they have turntables and all kinds of stuff.

MRR: How did you guys come up with the name?
Christine: It just sounded cool.
David: It was Christine's idea.
Christine: I don't even know. We had been writing these songs and we needed to come up with something. I found that phrase and found what it meant and I never really knew what it meant. It has something to do with this window tax on people in the 17th century England. It's an old British law that people were taxed per window. So very rich people would have tons of windows to show off their wealth and that became known as Daylight Robbery.
David: But now it's just a common phrase for crimes that happen during the daytime.
Christine: But that's where it comes from. Or corporate scandal.

MRR: So Christine, you were one of the organizers for the 2008 Clit Fest. I just wanted you to have a chance to talk about that experience, that aspect of your participation of punk. Like what do you think about specific spaces for woman in music or how was that experience working with other Chicago women.
Christine: It was a great experience. I really felt like I got to know the women involved in different aspects of the Chicago punk scene a little better and there were definitely moments of frustration which will happen with organizing anything of that size with that many people involved. But overall, I think it was a great experience and the shows themselves were really great and were some of the best shows I have been to since I have lived here and I'd say I would just like to see more …it kind of died out I know we tried to keep it going, I know that things like that just kind of dissipate and people go on with there lives, but I'd say right now in the Chicago scene there really aren't a lot of women involved or are actively playing. There are a lot of women who have been in bands or that have moved away. But the women who are out there who are doing stuff inspire me, but I definitely wish there were more woman involved in setting up shows, running things behind the scenes and playing shows, but I guess I drifted off from your question. I'd say overall it was a great experience and I am really glad I could be a part of it and help in any way that I could. The bands were all really amazing and I am so happy that we got to play. I hope we can all come together again and do great things together again because we really were super organized and did some really cool shit. It would be great to see all those ladies do something together again.
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DEZERTER

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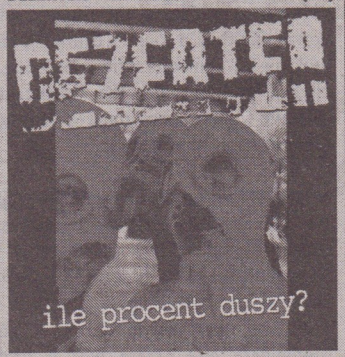

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The history of Australian band X is the classic fare of rock'n'roll: confrontational attitudes, abrasive personalities, substance abuse, violence, and barely notional commercial success. Loved by its fans and loathed with unbridled passion by the music industry, X was the perennial outsider. The first X album, X-Aspirations, *is cited regularly as one of the most influential punk rock records of all time. The band's lyrics provide an uncompromising account of the detritus of inner city living.*

Bass player Ian Rilen had cut his teeth in Band of Light in the early 1970s before moving on to join Rose Tattoo. Shortly after writing Rose Tattoo's classic hit "Bad Boy for Love," Rilen left, eager to find a musical outlet more commensurate with his uncompromising style. In 1977, Rilen hooked up with former cop and Easybeats roadie Steve Cafiero, guitarist Ian Krahe and a young hippie-inclined kid by the name of Steve Lucas.

Conceived in an era when rock'n'roll was being assailed by the dumb punk attitude of The Ramones and spiked by the anti-establishment rhetoric and offensive social behaviour of the Sex Pistols, X found its niche in the nascent Australian punk scene. But X was never a punk rock band. X was a throwback to an era when rock'n'roll lived on the fringes of socially accepted existence. Early gigs in Sydney were plagued with violence, alcohol and drug abuse, and the obligatory visits from the local police.

X played hard, it lived hard, and it suffered the tragic consequences of its commitment. Guitarist Ian Krahe died of an overdose in 1978, aged just 21. Original drummer Steve Cafiero died in 1988; Peter Coutanche and Cath Synnerdahl, both of whom had spent time in X over the years, also died, both in tragic circumstances. Then, in 2006, Ian Rilen succumbed to cancer. Rilen's taste for excess was as legendary as it was infamous. With his low-slung bass, tattooed arms and fuck-off demeanour, Rilen was, it's been said, born to play rock'n'roll. After Rilen's death it appeared X would be no more. Having spent 30 years waving between cult success and periodic implosion, finally it seemed that society had had its revenge on this caustic rock beast.

The re-release of the first two X albums on Australian re-release label Aztec Music was the catalyst for a new run of X shows, with Rilen's former bandmate (in the Love Addicts) Kim Volkmann assuming bass duties, and former drummer Cathy Green returning to the drum stool. In 2010, X makes its first ever overseas tour, with two weeks of gigs in the United States. With Volkmann on bass and former Cosmic Psychos drummer Bill Walsh on drums joining sole surviving member Steve Lucas on guitar and vocals, X refuses to go quietly. As Lucas has remarked in the past, X is the band they cannot kill.

On the eve of X's departure, Patrick Emery spoke to Steve Lucas about the long, sordid and tragic history of X.

MRR: Ian Rilen was already entrenched in the Australian rock'n'roll scene having played in Band of Light and Rose Tattoo before you came together in X. How did you first meet Ian?

Ian came to us via a guy called Eddie Fisher. It was after Ian got the boot from Rose Tattoo. Eddie knew Ian Krahe and Geoff Holmes. They'd been rehearsing and they were constantly looking for bass players. There was Ian Krahe, Geoff Holmes, myself and sometimes my cousin Tony, and a guy called Steve Harrison who used to play bass. We used to play songs, or try and learn songs. We had some idea of doing some band stuff, but nothing ever serious came of it. Ian [Krahe] and Geoff then found Eddie. Eddie kept pestering Ian [Rilen] to come and have a look at these two guys. I remember being asked to come along to a rehearsal. Ian Krahe had put up these ads saying, "Wanted: bass player. No wankers need apply." Ian rocked up, traditionally late, wearing this fur coat inside out, ripped jeans, eye makeup on, short, dyed red hair. I just thought, "Who the fuck is this?" He pulled out his bass and started ripping into stuff like "Hate City." Ian and Geoff were pretty impressed with all that.

I remember thinking it was a bit too angry for me—all this hate, hate, hate. It was a bit too negative because I wanted to have fun, without all the aggro. I thought, "That's not for me," and I left them to it. And then Ed and Geoff got closer to each other, and Ian and Ian got closer, and then they split. Ed and Geoff went off and formed a band called The Guilts. Ian and Ian were wondering what they were going to do.

MRR: How did Steve Cafiero come into the picture?

A mutual friend called Irish John said he knew this ex-cop called Steve who was an awesome drummer. It turned out that Steve Cafiero used to be a drum roadie with The Easybeats. He'd played in a band called The Creatures and he used to knock about with the guys from Hush—I think he managed them for a while. He was a very industry-founded man. And Ian [Rilen] with Rose Tattoo also had an industry background.

So the three of them liked each other from their first meeting, and then I got a telegram—I was living in Armidale at the time—saying to come down, that they'd found a drummer and they were looking for someone who could sing. And it just clicked straight away. We did the first rehearsal in Steve Cafiero's basement—we rehearsed every other day for three weeks.

MRR: What was the band's first gig?

We did our first gig at the Bondi Astor. We had a very humble poster for that gig—a foolscap page with maybe a blue X, maybe it was made out of potato cuts [laughs]. That was stuck on the door, and there might have been another stuck somewhere else—there was a limited release of two. So there we were on Bondi Beach with a dozen Maoris and some curious punks who'd come to see this band called X. I don't know where they'd heard about us because we literally

had rehearsed for three weeks.

MRR: Where did the band's name come from?
Ian Rilen was really obsessed—he said the name had to have X in it. There'd already been bands like X-Ray Spex, and I think XTC had started out by then. We couldn't think of any really good X words that were either good enough or cool enough. And then Ian Krahe said why didn't we just call it X—it'd be really easy to spell [laughs]. So X it was.

MRR: What are your memories of that first gig at the Bondi Astor in 1977?
I remember that when we got to the pub that night the zip on my jeans busted. So I went up to Johnny Dole, from Johnny Dole and the Scabs, to borrow a safety pin, because he had 100 of them on him.

We did "Hate City," "TV Cabaret Roll," we also did a fair few covers, like "Runaway" by Del Shannon, a couple of Easybeats songs—"She's So Fine" and "For My Woman." The next gig we did after that was the Paris Theatre, which was an old picture theatre. We were the opening act for Cold Chisel and Rose Tattoo. It was pretty easy to see after we played that we didn't really fit in with that industry thing. But that didn't really bother me or Ian Krahe very much. Steve and Rilen were a bit more concerned. About four songs into our set the guitar amp blew up and Rilen said, "This'll freak the young ones up," because Ian Krahe and I were ten years younger than the other two. So while someone was getting another head for the amp, Ian Krahe and I just walked over to the other side of the stage, rolled a cigarette and just chatted to other people while everyone rushed around stressing.

MRR: Steve and Ian Rilen were already experienced in the music industry. Did that experience ever influence how X developed in those early days?
We started seeing very quickly how the industry worked. Ian Krahe and I were particularly disenchanted. Steve and Ian Rilen—the elders—said we should go and see a booking agent. Initially we were thinking this guy was pretty cool. He got a phone call, and he was really nice on the phone, but looking at us and laughing, as if he was taking the piss out of them behind their backs. The conversation finished, and Ian Rilen and Steve were pretty keen, but Ian Krahe and I said we wanted to discuss it further.

When we got outside, the elders couldn't understand why we didn't want to sign with the agent, so we said, "Did you see how he treated the guy on the phone? What happens if he's exactly like that with us?" Ian Rilen and Steve said they'd never thought of it like that. Ian Krahe and I, with no experience at all, had this really idealistic view of how you did business with people. Ian Rilen loved that—that we were prepared to walk out on this major booking agent just because we didn't like the way they treated someone else. Poor old Steve almost died!

MRR: Given that Steve Cafiero and Ian Rilen were ten years older than you, was there always that "old guys-young guys" dynamic in the first line-up of X?
We didn't think of it like that because when someone's 30 and someone's 20, it doesn't seem like much of a difference. But their experience and their relationship with people in bands, with people you'd hear on the radio, their interaction with them, was something I used to feel a little bit intimidated by.

MRR: How quickly did you develop a live following in Sydney?
We only did three or four gigs before we started getting full houses. At some of the early shows the guys from Radio Birdman came along to check us out and gave us the thumbs up. So that opened the doors for a whole lot of other people when the word got out that Radio Birdman thought we were cool.

MRR: Did you guys think of yourselves as a punk rock band, or just a rock'n'roll band?
We always called ourselves a rock'n'roll band. Rilen and Cafiero had in mind a rock'n'roll band in the traditional Australian way with a harder edge, whereas Ian Krahe and myself wanted it to embody all things we'd been immersed in when we were at school, like Eddie Cochrane, Led Zeppelin, Rolling Stones, The Who, The Beatles.

We didn't have any particular understanding of how the industry worked, but we wanted to sound bigger, louder and raunchier than anyone else. Rilen was way ahead of us on that level—he had a 400 watt basehead, four fifteen inch speakers, and a cabinet with four twelve inch speakers. He was louder on stage than most of the systems we used to hire for the band. So we got a reputation for being fast and loud very quickly. Rilen went through a stage when he used to go to a guy who made piano strings, and he used to put piano strings on his bass guitar so he could get even more of an attack.

Steve Cafiero had the biggest Ludwig kit you could get; his arms were bigger than our thighs! When he hit a kit, he really hit it. He'd come out with two sticks in his hand, and one time he came out with four in each hand. He'd have the drum key in his mouth—people used to think he had chrome teeth, but he'd be hitting the snare so hard he'd have to tighten the skin after every song with the drum key. And I'd be screaming my head off just to get over the noise. And we'd just go for it.

MRR: The narrative of X's early shows is plagued with violent incidents. How did that come about?
People would read about us, and they'd be reading about the punk thing over in England, and the violence. All of a sudden, I don't know who it was, who threw the first chair, but it became the thing to do—to go to an X gig and trash the joint. We played at some hall and they just literally tore the place apart, and they did they same at the Whitehorse. As much as publicans would want to have us because we could pull a crowd, and they were massive drinkers, they couldn't afford the repairs afterwards. We got to the stage where we couldn't play anymore at the obvious pubs because we were banned from them. So we started hiring town halls and doing our own shows.

MRR: Were you conscious of your outsider image at that time?
All we were aware of was that we really loved what we were playing, and we hoped that someone would come along and sign us. We had all the hallmarks of the signing of a traditional rock'n'roll band. You'd turn up at a pub and people would riot and tear the place apart. But what we didn't have in those days was a manager or a publicist. So all this shit would happen but no-one would ever know about it because no-one was promoting it or exploiting it—if they had been, it might've been a totally different story for X.

So we just went along with the rest of the world being blissfully ignorant, causing mayhem in Sydney. I remember at one pub a brawl breaking out and someone getting a pool cue shoved through their eye and into their brain and that was the end of them. It became very difficult—and that was just in the first six months. It was just mayhem. But even in the midst of that mayhem we started running our own gigs. Always this element would come along and destroy everything because of what they were reading about overseas—other bands had trouble but not like we did.

MRR: Ian Krahe died in 1978, at which time you were barely 21. How hard did Ian's death hit you?

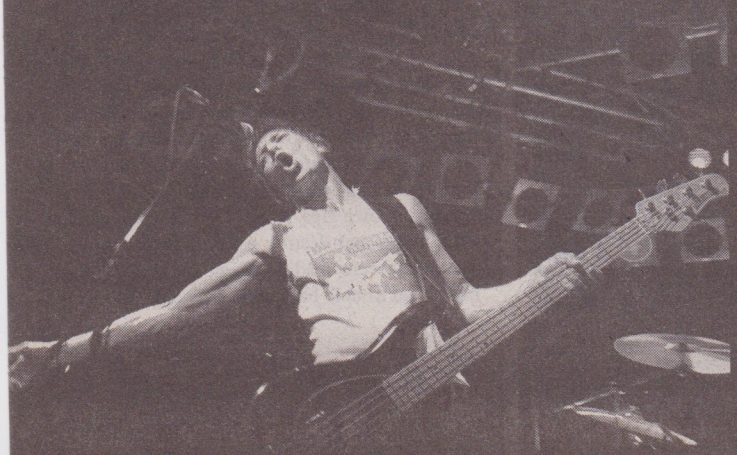
I've been thinking a lot about that a lot recently. The night Ian died we'd played a gig at the Bondi Lifesaver, and it was a fantastic gig. At that time we lived in this hotel in King's Cross. Mick Cocks [Rose Tattoo] lived there, one of the guys from Cold Chisel lived there, maybe Don Walker, and then we all moved in. Ian Rilen moved in with his family, Ian Krahe moved in, and I moved in. It was this big private hotel in King's Cross. Just prior to the gig, Ian Krahe had not been well. He was a chronic asthmatic. Before the gig, Ian Krahe had taken me aside and said it was going to be a really special gig, though I can't remember exactly what was so special about it. We were headlining and it was a prestige gig. Afterwards when we were talking about it, Ian Rilen said Ian Krahe had taken him aside as well and said how great the gig was.

Everything was perfect, though we were all pretty out of it, as usual. I lay down on the stage for a while. The venue owner told Ian Rilen that if I didn't stand up he was going to dock us, so Rilen said, "If he wants to fucking sing laying down, then fucking let him sing laying down! You can still hear him anyway!" I think I was tripping at the time, and I had to lie down because it was too weird standing up and looking at all these people. But I got up again. It wasn't like I freaked out or anything. I just wanted to lie down.

After the show, instead of going back to the hotel with everyone, they were just going to party on. The next thing I know, Ian Rilen is practically kicking the door in and says, "Something terrible has happened. Ian's dead!" I couldn't believe it. I'd seen him the night before. The initial explanation was that he'd died because his lungs had collapsed due to chronic asthma. Later on we found out that he'd had some heroin before he went to bed, but then again, so had everyone else.

Twenty years later I ran into one of his nieces and we got to talking about it. She said they'd found out that Ian had called his father at two o'clock in the morning and asked him for some money. So he went and bought some heroin and did it by himself. That was that the end of Ian Krahe. That was the death of my best friend.

I remember at the funeral we all turned up, but we couldn't bring ourselves to go in the church. There were hundreds of punks there. We saw the casket go in, but I don't think we could deal with it then. The band had only been going for six to nine months, and we didn't know what we were going to do. The morning after he died, I went around and saw his folks and they were heartbroken. They kept asking me if he was taking drugs. I told them, truthfully, no. When I left, we'd all had plenty to drink, but I didn't know of any drug taking. I really thought he'd just died in his sleep. They said they didn't want to know about any of this stuff anymore. They thanked me for coming around and offering my condolences, but they didn't want to be reminded of it, and so they didn't want me to come around anymore. They said good luck and that was it.



MRR: But you decided to keep the band going after Ian Krahe's death?

We still had some gigs booked, and the only person we knew that had any real close insight into Ian's playing was Geoff Holmes. We got hold of him and did our next gig, which was going to be our last gig. We were going to break up after then. But it went alright with Geoff, so we decided to keep going.

About another six months later Geoff got into Ian's ear, and said we didn't need a lead singer, and that he and Ian were the ones writing the songs and it made sense for them to be singing them. Ian could be so strong and so stubborn, but he was also susceptible to someone pissing in his ear. Eventually he called a band meeting, well, he rang me up, and said, "We don't think this format's going to work anymore, and we're going to sing our own words." I said, "What about the stuff I write?" and he said, "Well, we'll just put our own words in there. It's our music after all." I said, "What about the gig we've got for next Saturday?" and he said "Nah, we've cancelled that."

Then they went and did the gig at the Civic, and the reception was so aggressive. There was graffiti like "Two down, two to go" around the place, and there was a very nasty backlash. I was woken up on the Sunday morning by Cafiero who said, "I don't give a fuck what those other two wankers said, but you're back in the band or I'm leaving." Then about ten or eleven Ian sheepishly came in and said, "I don't know what the hell that was about. That was an accident." I knew he'd played by then because Cafiero had told me, but I said, "What do you mean? You didn't play that gig without me, did you?" And Ian was like, "Oh, oh, ah ..."

I told him Steve had already been around and told me that he'd leave unless I came back. So Geoff had to swallow a bit of bile, I suppose. We did another few shows with him and then thought we'd get someone else.

MRR: So that was when Peter Coutanche joined the band?

We poached him from the Kamikaze Kids. We used to use them a lot as supports. He looked great as well, good build, great personality, clean sort of image.

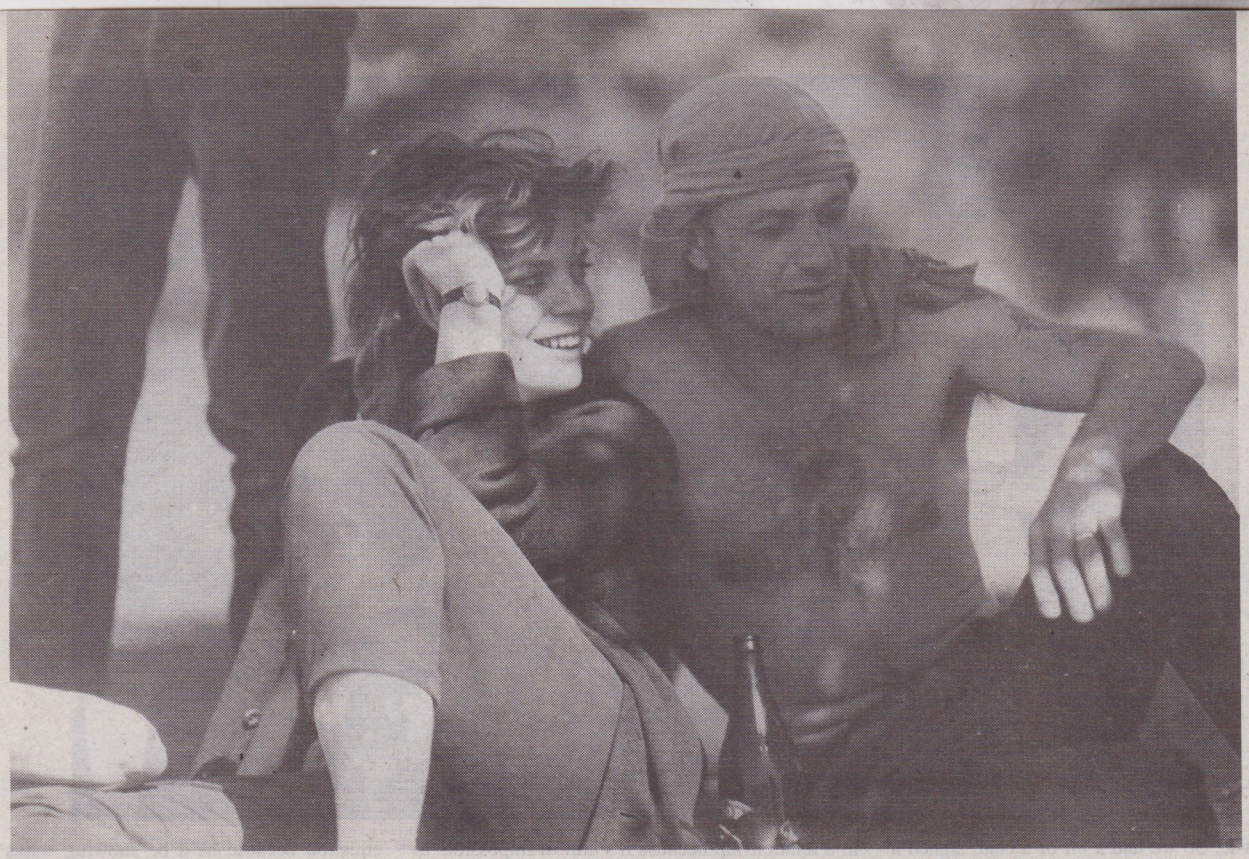
MRR: What led to Peter leaving X?

During that process we kept writing songs. I don't know what happened with Peter. I think everyone just decided he was too nice to have in a band like X.

MRR: And that was when you moved onto guitar?

Yeah, we were left with who was going to play guitar. Ian and Steve said they'd been talking and decided that the only one who should be doing it is me. Ian Krahe and I had been born four days apart

Photos on this page Sarah Crews



in the same hospital, so we couldn't be closer in that respect. I was handed the guitar, Ian Krahe's guitar, and we started rehearsing.

MRR: It must have been around that time that you went into the studio with Lobby Loyde to record *X-Aspirations*.
We'd been rehearsing for about three months. Lobby had just come back from England and he heard us in the studio and said, "This is awesome. We have to record it." So we went into Trafalgar Studios with the idea of putting down a bunch of tracks, and taking the best one and making it the single. What happened was that we played everything that I knew how to play, and the engineer, Charles Fisher, who owned the studio, said there was nothing there that he considered to be a single. And Lobby said, "You're absolutely right. It's an album!" [laughs]

MRR: What was Lobby like to work with in the studio?
Well, we were only there for a few hours, so he wasn't like anything! We set up and played the stuff, and went in and re-did the vocals. They're all first takes—you can hear us laughing at the end of one track into another because we fucked up the ending to the song. All I remember was that it was fun, but nothing like I expected. So that was that. We grabbed some falafels, some beer, and went and saw Rose Tattoo somewhere.

MRR: *X-Aspirations* is now regarded as one of the seminal Australian, and international, punk rock records. What reaction did it get at the time?
Double J [Sydney radio station] loved it. They used to play tracks off of it all the time. I took copies into a store in Sydney called Anthem where Rob Younger [Radio Birdman, New Christs] worked, and he really liked it. It wasn't hard selling it. Every now and again we'd pick up another box of 25 records, and take them to the local indie stores, like Phantom, Waterfront and Red Eye. We didn't even sell them at gigs or anything. We had no real concept of merchandising. We didn't really go out and seek a distributor or anything.

But things kept building. We were doing places like the Stage Door, which held 1000 people, and the Civic. We'd do three full houses in one night, but we'd only get told about one of them. The rock'n'roll rip-off thing was endemic. The only one who knew anything about it was Steve Cafiero, and every time he tried to tell us there was a lot of money coming into the band that wasn't being managed, we didn't do anything about it. Lobby had his own go at managing us when he formed his management company called Scam, and there was never a more appropriate name for a management company in the history of the universe!

MRR: That was about 1980 or so?
Yeah, a lot happened in three years, and then nothing much happened. We consolidated ourselves as Lucas, Rilen and Cafiero, or Rilen, Lucas and Cafiero, whichever order you want to put it, and we did shows. But we were doing the same run of inner city pubs, and things were becoming a bit stifled. I think in early 1982 we made our first venture down to Melbourne, and I fell in love with the place.

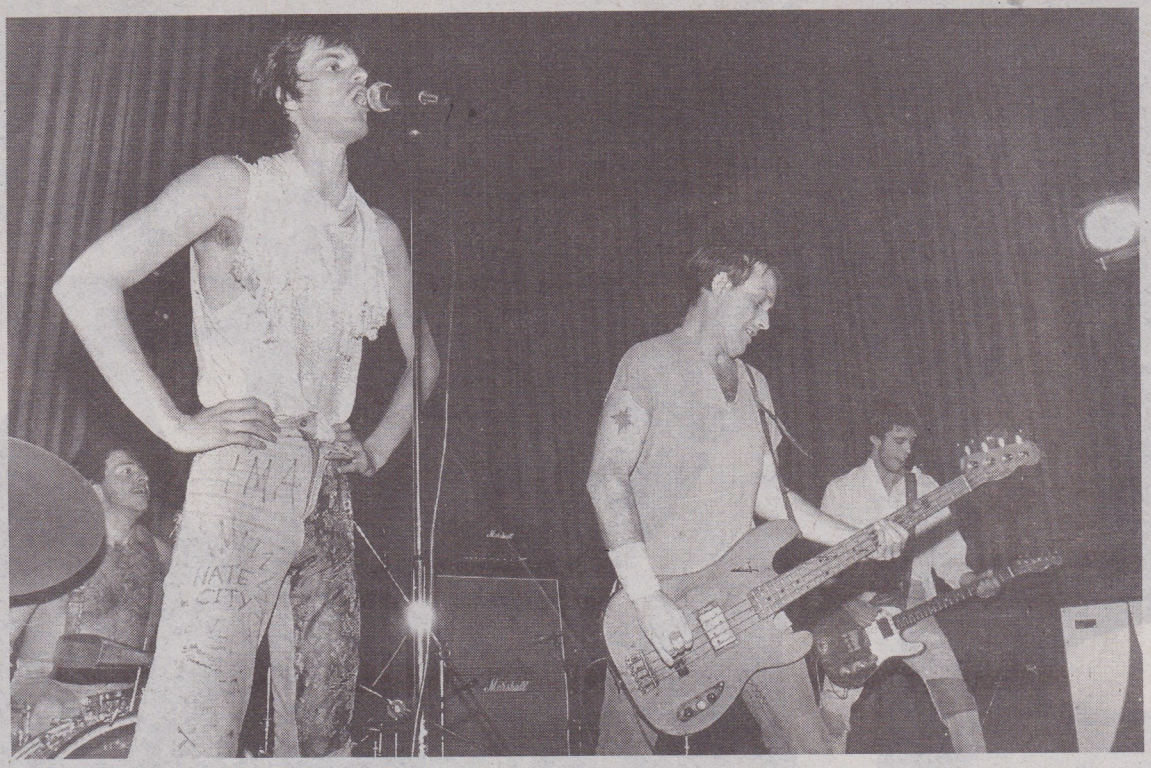
MRR: Why didn't you play in Melbourne before then?
I don't know. We'd never thought of it, and no one had ever asked us. Ian was actually from Melbourne. We came down for a weekend, and I couldn't believe the hospitality and the willingness of people to welcome us into their homes. Immediately we were on every door list. It was like we'd been given the keys to the city. It was so different to Sydney where everything was so factionalised. Melbourne just opened its heart to us, so I couldn't wait to come back.

We got offered some more gigs, and it was close to Christmas and Steve didn't want to go all way the way down to Melbourne. He was fairly frustrated that we hadn't followed up on the album. We still were anti-agency, anti-management, but Ian and I were really keen to come down and do these shows, so Steve said we'd have to get another drummer.

MRR: What led you to recruit Cathy Green into the band to replace Steve?
We must have been with Premier [booking agency] by this stage. Gerard from Premier said there was this girl down in Melbourne who was a really shit-hot drummer, and Ian said [adopts gruff voice], "We can't have any girls in X!" [laughs] I thought, well it might be interesting.

Ian rang up Doug from Hunters and Collectors and asked if he'd play drums with us. I said I wanted to check out this other person anyway. We had to drive down from Sydney, and it was very late in the evening when we met Cathy. Once she got the feel of the songs I thought, "This is so much easier to play guitar to." With Steve's formatting you had to be very, very on, whereas Cath had this swing style, which I responded to on guitar. We walked out of there saying, "You've got the gig," and then Ian said later, "I don't know," and I said, "What are you saying? She's awesome! If you don't let her in, I'm going to leave!" And then Ian relented. But right up until soundcheck of the first gig he had Doug all ready with his drum kit all packed up to come along to the rescue! From that point on it was just Cathy. Things just continued on. There'd be a run of shows, and then there'd be nothing. We'd talk about something, and then we wouldn't go through with it. Or we'd be on the verge of breaking up, but then we'd play again.

And then we had a gig down in Melbourne at Chasers, and afterwards one of the guys from the Olympic Sideburns came up and said he'd been trying to get hold of us for ages because he wanted to offer us a record deal. He was representing



Major Music. So we had a bit of a chat, signed a deal with them, and then went in and did *At Home With You*. We had the luxury of ten days in the studio. It wasn't like *X-Aspirations*.

MRR: *At Home With You* is a much more polished record than *X-Aspirations*, partly because of the presence of the Horns of Contempt [the Hunters and Collectors' horn section].
X-Aspirations was ad lib and off the cuff, so there wasn't much we could do with it. With *At Home With You*, we didn't go in there expecting to do anything different. Cathy said, "Why don't you do that really nice song that you wrote?" I asked her which one and she said, "Don't Cry No Tears." I said, "But you guys don't do anything on it," and Cathy said, "Yeah, but you should play it." So I threw down the guitar parts, and by then the guys from the Hunters had come in, and Lobby suggested we put some French horn on it.

In that way, *At Home With You* had the chance to grow a little bit in the studio. We didn't do lots of takes, but we did different versions of a couple of songs. With "Movin' On" I sang it like I'd normally sing it, then Lobby said, "Nah, push yourself harder," so I did it again and he said, "Push yourself harder," and he kept going on until my voice just about broke, and every time I sang my mouth felt like I'd swallowed a mouthful of hot gravel. When he finally got that broken, shattered vocal take out of me he said, "That's great. You don't sound like a poof anymore!" [laughs] Every time I hear that track I think of the pain.

MRR: Around that time Ian and Cathy had begun a relationship. Was that difficult for you to manage as part of the band dynamic?
Yeah, definitely. If they had a fight I was either of their best friends, which made things very difficult because you can't be two people's best friend when they're fighting with each other. I was the shit in the shit sandwich quite often, as far as that goes. Touring was hard as well when you've got people in a relationship because it's almost impossible to keep personal shit out of the music.

There were a few times when it almost exploded, and a few times when it actually did. When we made the film clip to "Degenerate Boy", Ian had a big bruise around his eye and a cut lip. That wasn't makeup for "Degenerate Boy," it was because the night before we did the film clip, Ian and Cathy had gone out drinking, and Ian passed out in a gutter somewhere, and in Cathy's efforts to kick him into consciousness, she'd inflicted all this damage to his head! But it went very well with the character of the film clip. [laughs]

MRR: You guys had a reputation for hard living. How much of that was justified?
Well, we did live hard. We did everything hard. We played hard, we partied hard. We all went through the drug scene and stuff. I personally had no tolerance, not ethically, but the whole heroin chic that went on down here made me so physically ill that I couldn't really partake in it. I did get a bit moralistic about it. Songs like "Degenerate Boy" were a satire, not an anthem. I went through a stage when I refused to play it live because I didn't want to be encouraging anyone to go out and use their rent money to buy smack.

MRR: What was your relationship like with Ian? Were your friends or professional colleagues?
We were friends, but we were also rivals in the band. Ian didn't like playing second fiddle, and I don't think anyone ever considered him the lead singer. I was the lead singer, and I think that used to chaff with him sometimes. But there were times when we were the best of friends, and there were times when we despised each other. That's normal for any relationship where there's passion involved, whether it's love making or song writing. We wrote a lot of songs together in the first couple of years as a team, maybe about 120 songs, most of which we never recorded.

But when Cathy came in, that did upset the equation because he'd be showing songs to her, rather than ringing me up, and coming around and showing me an idea. So when I'd present a song, I didn't have any back up. So things reached a stalemate, which we got past because we had such a rich back catalogue of songs. It wasn't too much of a thing. As for how I'd describe our relationship, I've said before that we had a love-hate relationship. He hated loving me, and I loved hating me.

MRR: What happened with the third record ... *And More*?
We were playing a lot around the late '80s, to my memory, though we also went through a stage when we'd only play on full moons, just so everyone would go crazy. And they'd all go crazy [laughs]. We'd play, break up, play, et cetera. And that only made us even less attractive to the music industry.

Finally Lobby was able to convince Michael Gudinski into having something to do with us. We went into record *X and More*. We wanted it to be like *At Home With You*, exploring some other dimensions of the band. I wanted to do a release on the White Label [Mushroom Records imprint] where we got 12%, but Ian wanted to do a traditional Mushroom imprint, where you only got 3%.

We'd go into the studio with Tony Cohen [producer], and Tony would duck out of the studio saying he was going to get a milkshake, and he'd be gone for two or three days. So it was frustrating. But there were some hysterical moments. Ian and I heard these girls doing harmonies so we brought them in, but it turned out they weren't any good in the studio. So Ian and I decided to do the oohs and aahs ourselves. That was one of the most hysterical times we've had in a studio.

But there was all this other stuff was going on. I was refusing to sign the contract, and everyone hated me for that. Eventually I gave in after they gave me an exclusion clause on my contract that allowed me to do stuff outside of X. Ian and

Cathy were starting to write songs together, so I could hear the bells tolling for our song writing relationship.

Around the time of *X and More*, it was all starting to fall apart. Lobby said he'd sent all the tapes to New York to be fixed by this guy. Ian and I said we should be there, but they said there wasn't enough money to send us there, and we'd only slow the process down. We were pretty shitty about that.

I was in nightclub one night and someone came up to me and said, "I've heard the new album and it's awesome," and I said, "How come you've heard it?" And they said, "Rob the taxi driver is mixing it," and I said, "Who the fuck is Rob the taxi driver?? Apparently it was down at Richmond Records. I rang up our tour manager at the time, and the two of us went screaming around to Richmond Records and tried to kick the doors down.

MRR: Was it around this time that the infamous incident of Ian and Cathy trashing the Mushroom offices occurred?

Mushroom had taken us out to lunch and we'd got pretty drunk. I'd gone home because my wife was six months pregnant. Ian and Cathy went off to this cocktail party with some Mushroom reps, and got totally fucking wasted, went back to the Mushroom offices and demanded to see our new film clip. The Mushroom people couldn't find the film clip, so Ian and Cathy tipped the board table over, started interfering with the gold records hanging on the wall. Basically they were evicted from the premises.

The next day I went down to sign the publishing deal and everyone was avoiding eye contact with me and refused to talk to me. Eventually someone said, "What do you expect? No-one wants to have anything to do with you guys after last night" And then he explained what had happened last night, and I thought, "Oh, fuck," and I could just see everything crumbling before my eyes, the future of the band. The guy eventually took pity on me and gave me a deal of sorts. But that was pretty much it. The only reason that record came out at all was that I rang Lobby and said we should at least put something out, so we chose the ten best songs, seeing as X is ten in Roman numerals, and called it *X and More*, because there were a few cameo pieces on there. The only reason the record was released was to save face.

By the time the record came out we were pretty disenchanted. Ian and Cathy's relationship had disintegrated, my wife had a baby and I started recording a solo album, and things started moving away from X.

Somehow X came back together, I don't know how. Someone offered us $1000 to do a gig, so we said, "Sure," and it was going to be our last ever gig. Then someone offered to fly us up to Sydney to do a last ever gig in Sydney. Then we did another last ever gig in Melbourne because we'd spent so much time down here. And then it just sort of started up again.

MRR: I remember seeing you reform the four-piece line-up at the Meredith Music Festival in 1997 or 1998.

That was with Eddie Fisher back in the line-up. By that time, Ian and my wife had run off together, which made things very difficult. The first ever gig we did after that I said I'd only do on one condition. I had my hair up in bangs, and I had a clown's nose. I walked on stage and Ian said, "You can't fucking play looking like that!" and I said, "I play like this, or I don't play at all!" Ian was always so fucking image-conscious, so I thought, "If you're going to treat me like a fucking clown, then I'll dress like one!"

So we struggled through all of that, and then the wheels fell off again. For a while Ian and I got back together and did a residency together. We did the 20th anniversary gigs, with Geoff on guitar, and Eddie on drums.

MRR: After Ian died in 2006 most people assumed it was the absolute end of X. What led to X being revived?

We did the Studio 22 thing with Cath Synnerdahl, and the double album in 2000. I loved playing with Cath, but then she committed suicide. I found out around the same time that Peter Coutanche also committed suicide. They both hanged themselves. When Ian died, I thought, "That's it."

One day I realized I really missed playing these songs. So one night I rang up the Greyhound Hotel in St. Kilda and said I'd like to do a night "of X music." That's what I was going to call it. Kim Volkmann was going to play bass, and John Hall would play drums. I just wanted to play my favorite X songs. I miss Ian, I miss Steve Cafiero, I miss Cath, I miss Pete, I miss everyone. It seemed such a waste of life and energy to no longer have everyone there.

A couple hundred people turned up that night, and they liked it. So I thought I'd do that every now and again. Then Helen Marcou and Quincy McLean asked if we'd play the Bakehouse Studios Christmas party at The Tote, and we did, and that old spark reunited. Then we did the thing at the Forum with The Saints and the DVD.

It just came alive again. Kim did a very good Ian, almost to the point of being possessed by Ian, which is what brought Kim undone in the end. He started acting so much like Ian, emotionally and physically, that it was starting to fuck up gigs. I'd been through all that before with Ian, but I could put up with that because he'd been there from the beginning, but I wasn't going through it again. So I got Kevin playing bass and that was fine. People just started offering us things again. We got offered the support for Flipper, which was fine.

MRR: How did this US tour come about?

Steve Lucas: I got an email from Timmy Hefner in Texas offering us a gig at a festival. I said we needed more than one gig to justify going to the States. He said that was fair enough. We decided on a couple of weeks because Cathy didn't want to be away from her son for too long. And then later Cathy decided that she didn't want to go at all 'cause her son is just starting primary school.

MRR: So you've got Bill Walsh from the Cosmic Psychos on drums instead?

Steve Lucas: Yeah, I was at Cherry Bar one night and Bill said, "I'll play drums." Bill's come back in a Cafiero sense. When I talk to Bill he's very savvy. He knows X's history, and he doesn't want to put me through all of that again. Riots are all fine when people actually want to express some emotion to the band, but when they're only doing it to vent their own spleens, for the sheer demonic pleasure of it, it didn't turn me on. We've had people turning up to gigs with X carved, bleeding into their skin saying, "We don't have any money, but this is proof of our devotion so you've got let us in." You couldn't say no, but on the other hand I'm passed all that, and I've seen enough death.

MRR: You've got some archival material mooted for release, plus some older unrecorded material. Is that correct?

Steve Lucas: We found some old demos featuring myself, Ian Rilen, Steve Cafiero and Ian Krahe. Aztec Music is dealing with that, going to make them as good as possible. There'll be another release from the archives. There's the four piece version of "Revolution," "Good On You Baby," "Degenerate Boy," "Hate City" might be on there as well. I think they're the only ones we re-recorded with the other line-up. That'll come out hopefully sometime this year.

And if an actual bona fide record company comes out with an offer for an X album, we'd do it. If Cathy wants to come on the album, then she'll play on it. Bill can play on it. Maybe we can have two drummers. [laughs]

MRR: So how long can you keep the X ball rolling?

Steve Lucas: I love X. It was the first real band I was ever in. It cost me my best friend's life, and so many other lives. If I live to be a 100, and I can still play guitar, then I'll get up and do an X song. If anyone wants to try and stop me, then they'll fucking have to try and stop me!

Aspirations is being repressed by Rocknroll Blitzkrieg for the US tour, along with the *Home Is Where the Floor Is* 7"

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Thurs May 20th: Olympia,WA at Northern w/ Gun Outfit

Fri May 21st: Seattle,WA at the Funhouse w/ Walls

Sat May 22nd: Portland,OR at Slabtown

Sun May 23rd: Woodland, CA at Operation: Restore Maximum Freedom IX Fest

Mon May 24th: San Fran, CA at the Hemlock w/ Hank IV

Tues May 25th: LA, CA at the Five Star Bar w/ the Lamps

Thurs May 27th: Austin, TX at Chaos in Tejas Fest (X will perform this night at Red 7 w/ the Spits, Ty Segall, Wild Thing and Bad Sports)

Sat May 29th: Denton, TX at Rubber Gloves w/ Video

Sun May 30th: Las Cruces, NM at the Trainyard (102 Conway Space 3W) w/ Far Corners and Real Blood

Mon May 31st: Phoenix, AZ at the Rhythm Room w/ Earthmen and Strangers and Pigeon Religion

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TY SEGALL

Ty Segall is one of my favorite musicians. He plays garage rock that mixes pretty melodies with distortion and noise. He has released two fabulous albums: a self-titled one on Castle Face, and Lemons *on Goner plus a whole bunch of great singles. Ty arrived on skateboard to the interview. I rode my bicycle. We met at a taquería and ate vegetarian tacos. That is the embarrassingly Californian scenario in which this interview took place.*
Interview and photos by Carolyn Keddy

MRR: Tell me why you play music
Why I play music?
MRR: Yeah.
(silence)
MRR: I thought I'd start with an easy one.
Well, I can't paint, can't draw, can't really take pictures or do anything like that. I guess it's, its fun. It's the best thing to do. I think besides surfing.
MRR: How did you start playing?
I started playing drums when I was a little kid. I got a drum set when I was like three. I didn't really play it until I was eleven.
MRR: The same kit?
Yeah, mini kit. Yeah, I don't even know why I play music. I just kind of do it now.
MRR: Did yourww parents?
My dad was a drummer. My mom was a singer.
MRR: What was your first band?
This band called Love This. First we were going to call ourselves Love. Like, "It's such a good name. No one's ever thought of Love." We made a demo CD and I brought it to a record store. The guy looked at me like, "Are you kidding me?" The name of the demo CD was *This*. I said, "No no, it's called Love This." The band's called Love This, man. That was a fun band we just played house parties and stuff. It was a no-wavey, dancey band. More Contortions-y kind of stuff. My buddy Coleman played bass and keyboards at the same time.
MRR: Why were you doing that kind of stuff?
We just really liked that kind of stuff. I got into that kind of stuff before I got into garage music. It was kind of backwards.
MRR: Who introduced you to it?
My buddy Coleman gave me a copy of *New York Noise*, that Soul Jazz compilation. He also bought *Buy,* the Contortions record. So I just listened to *Buy* and that compilation for a year straight. It's my favorite stuff cause it was just so weird. I never heard anything like that before. I was like what is this crazy music? I heard Black Flag and The Misfits and stuff when I was in eighth grade. Minor Threat, all that stuff. But nobody wanted to play hardcore music with me. Then I really got into the no-wave kind of stuff.
MRR: You're from Southern California. Was there a hardcore scene where you were?
No. At least not that I knew of when I was a young kid. There were a couple of punk bands I wasn't really into. I didn't really know of any hardcore bands. I am sure there were some. I just knew of Le Shok and the Stitches. Those were the local heroes. That's all I knew of when I was in high school. I wasn't really into punk at that time. I listened to some punk stuff when I was way young, then I didn't listen to it. I was into really bad music for a couple of years.
MRR: How long did Love This last?
On and off for two years. It was pretty fun, just a party band. We were obsessed with the idea of "party". What that meant and all definitions of the word party. Like the really negative and the really positive. We were never going to play anything but parties. All of our songs were about parties, but about really bad things at parties. It was the on going theme of party, whatever that meant. It was so weird. I still think the idea of parties is very loaded. There is so much to it. Total high school themes, high school stuff. It was when the Rapture and !!! and all that stuff was the thing. I still think

that stuff is pretty good.

MRR: What came next?

Then I learned how to play the guitar. I wanted to start a band with a guitar. Then my buddies Michael, Nolan and I started Epsilons. I was seventeen. None of us knew what we were doing. Nobody knew how to play. It was fun. I didn't know how to write any lyrics so the lyrics were so bad.

MRR: Like what?

About Robots. Some seventeen year old kid singing about love. He doesn't even know what love is. I didn't know what anything was. Ridiculous stuff. I was trying to act all sophisticated. I had no idea what I was talking about. You know those kinds of songs? So stupid. It's pretty funny though.

MRR: What happened with that band?

We recorded one record. It's bad, so bad. I listen to these lyrics after the fact, and I was like don't put it out. But then I was like now we have to make a good one. We can't stop playing until we make a good one. At least save a little bit of this thing. Then we went and recorded at the Distillery. I thought we made a pretty OK record. So cool, we can stop now. We got to play the Smell and stuff. That was really fun. That was like a dream going out to play at the Smell. We got to meet Mika Miko. Hang out with them and got to know them. It was nice to meet people you respected and have them like your music too. Then I moved to San Francisco and that band didn't play anymore.

MRR: Then came Traditional Fools?

I knew Andrew from down in Southern California. I met Dave. I asked Andrew if he wanted to play one day and he said his buddy Dave wants to play too. I remembered Dave when I went over to his house. We just started hanging out and playing music. We started out with Cramps covers. Silly stuff.

MRR: Has it always been as crazy as it is when Traditional Fools usually play out? Dave's guitar always seems to be broken.

Yeah, it's always been like that. I guess that's our style or something. We never bring everything by accident. We always forget something. Forget to show up on time. Forget that we had a show or whatever. It's great fun. That band is really fun.

MRR: It's always fun to see.

It's fun to play drums too. I hadn't played drums in a long time. Drums are the most fun.

MRR: I saw you play drums with a broken arm.

Yeah. I had to do it.

MRR: It was pretty amazing.

Thanks. That was opening up for Jay Reatard and I am a huge Reatards fan. I am super big fan of *Blood Visions*. So we couldn't cancel the Jay Reatard show. Stick a drumstick in my cast. Let's make this work. The show must go on. If you can move, you can play. Unless I'm crying then I'll sit out. If it's an emotional problem, then I'll sit out. But if it's a physical problem, I'm ready to do it.

MRR: What was it Russell Quan said?

The coolest compliment ever was when Traditional Fools played Budget Rock the first time. Russell Quan walked up to me after and said, "Good drumming." And I freaked out. I was like that's Russell fuckin' Quan from the Mummies. I can stop playing drums now. Thank you very much. To quote Drew, "The Insane. Too Real."

MRR: When did you start doing the one-man band?

I just had songs I didn't think the Fools would want to play. The Fools are very specific as a group to what songs they want to do. I can't bring in a Neil Young rip off song and say let's do this song. I guess it was more fun to just record whatever I want to in my room. I was getting more into psychedelic music and I just recorded in my room. My buddy Kyle who put out the Traditional Fools tapes wanted to do a tape with me. So I said yeah cause I had no intention of it being anything really. So I got to put out a tape. I got the chance to play once and then I got asked to do more. It kept going. It's been fun to be able to put out records. Basically whatever chance I have to play. It's cool.

MRR: How did you learn how to record?

By trial and error, basically. I had a cassette four-track thing. Then Dave from Traditional Fools, he went to school for recording. So he got a reel to reel and showed me how to use that. I borrowed it for six months and am still borrowing it. I just use that. Whenever I have a chance to learn something or watch somebody do something, I do. I just go check it out. It's fun to screw up too. Sometimes screwing up stuff makes it better.

MRR: What kind of stuff do you write about?

Anything. I don't know. I go through phases. I have the topical songs or whatever. Or stupid poetry. Or really stupid songs about a stupid dance or something really bad. Or songs about problems I have with myself. It's kind of all over the place. But nothing too serious is the key. It can't be too serious. It's got to be just serious enough. I will with the Fools.

MRR: That I can see. (laughs)

I don't know. (laughs) Was Ray Davies ever serious? Ever too serious?

MRR: Oh my god, he is always serious.

But not too serious.

MRR: No, I guess not. He has a good sense of humor.

Yeah. Syd Barrett was serious, but in like a really awesome way.

MRR: Plus he was insane.

I don't know. I just won't try like (sings) "Change the world, make it better".

MRR: It's not your thing, huh?

No.

MRR: Does it ever bother you that when people review your records they always point out how young you are?

No. It doesn't bother me because I am young. It might actually give me a little bit of leeway. No, it doesn't matter to me.

MRR: Most garage rockers are older dudes.

It is funny. I was getting compared to that Wavves dude a lot. That was lame.

MRR: Is he old or young?

I think he's my age.

MRR: Then I always compare you to Jay Reatard although with me it is mostly because I met him when he was eighteen too.

Yeah.

MRR: How did you hook up with Goner?

I just asked them actually.

MRR: It's that easy?

It's pretty crazy. I did not think it was going to go down like that. I thought what dream labels could I try to be on. I thought Crypt, Goner, In The Red. But then I just thought Goner and I e-mailed them. They were like "yeah, yeah". 'Cos John Dwyer said that Zac really liked my record when he gave him a copy at Goner Fest. I was like it doesn't hurt to try. Maybe I can get a single out of it. Maybe nothing will come out of it. But they were totally like "yeah." It was totally strange. It was crazy. I mean it was really cool. It's a total honor. It was nuts, I mean really. A couple of my friends were like "what the fuck?!" It was pretty amazing. I have no idea how.

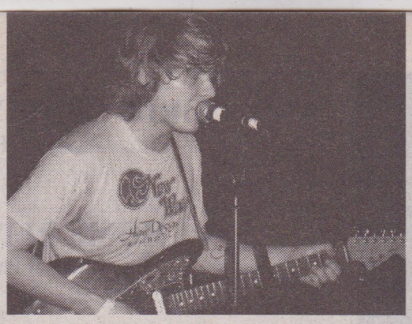
MRR: Oh, come on.

It's funny because they didn't let me play the [2008] Goner Fest.

MRR: Really?

I think it was too late. I was on tour with Thee Oh Sees and Sic Alps and John tried to get me on there. I just hung out. This past year I was on the marquee. It was so funny. How did this happen?

MRR: Goner would be my dream label too.



They're pretty awesome. Super sweet guys. The sweetest people.

MRR: Yeah I know. Which is weird in the "biz." It's good to see they are successful and nice.

They just do what they want to do. It's so cool. They just put out what they want to put out. They have the raddest record store ever.

MRR: Do you think your next record is going to be with the full band record or are you going to keep playing everything yourself?

Now I am just having all my friends come in and play with me, whenever anybody wants to come play something. Most of the stuff is just me, but I want to get all my buds on it.

MRR: You have a great band. It might be nice to have some recordings with them.

Oh, yes. We're going to do a live record, I think. That will be with them. Yeah, I want them to record. Sure.

MRR: What's your new stuff sound like?

I'm still figuring out the sound. You'll see, It's weirder stuff. The newer stuff.

MRR: In what way?

It's like '70s rock. It's like grunge or something. It's weird. But poppy. It's a bit poppier. I don't even know. I can't describe it. Listen to it. It's different. It's cleaner. Maybe that's my goal to make a clean record. That's hard.

MRR: Why do you want to do that?

To make it sound clean and good. It's so easy to just turn everything up to ten and be like here you go. If it's clean and it still sounds awesome, you win. We should call this interview I don't know what I am doing.

MRR: If you could do a duet with anyone dead or alive who would you pick?

I have no idea. For some reason Hendrix. Just to be like, dude I fuckin' sang with Hendrix. Hi-fives all around. Hendrix shit! You know what? I don't know.

MRR: You like Beefheart.

That would be really cool. That would be insane. I would like to just watch him sing. I think me singing with him would totally ruin it. Or Aretha Franklin or something. James Brown. I could just do the "hey." Back up heys. That would be awesome. Or Toots from the Maytalls.

MRR: Bob Marley?

I don't have the irony for Bob Marley, for sure.

(laughs)

MRR: Something to work on.

OK. I'll send you an e-mail. Duets are crazy.

MRR: In the Traditional Fools you all sing. Do you sing at the same time?

A lot of those songs are us singing at the same time. A lot of woah's and hey's. Ahh's or wahh's.

MRR: What do have coming up in the future?

I'm broke and I don't have a job so I gotta try to find a job.

MRR: I thought you were a rock star. You don't have any money?

No way. I wish.

MRR: I am obviously being sarcastic.

I wish. I don't know what I am doing with that stuff. I'd like to find a career of some kind, but it's pretty difficult these days.

MRR: What else are you doing?

Just recording and stuff.

MRR: Is Goner going to do another record?

They said they would.

MRR: Are you going to record more bands?

Yeah. I just recorded the Culture Kids.

MRR: When is that going to come out?

I don't know. A couple of months or something. They're going to do a full length. My goal is to make it sound like the Pagans or something.

MRR: Are they going to put your name in big print across the cover like Charlie and the Moonhearts?

Oh man.

MRR: Sorry. I thought that was so funny.

I'd like to record other bands too.

MRR: Would you do that in your room too?

No. Wherever. I've done it in my room. I live in a closet now so I can't really record in there.

MRR: Anything else you want to tell me?

No. I feel like the more I talk, the more stupid things I say.

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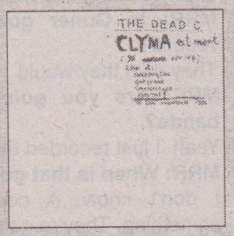

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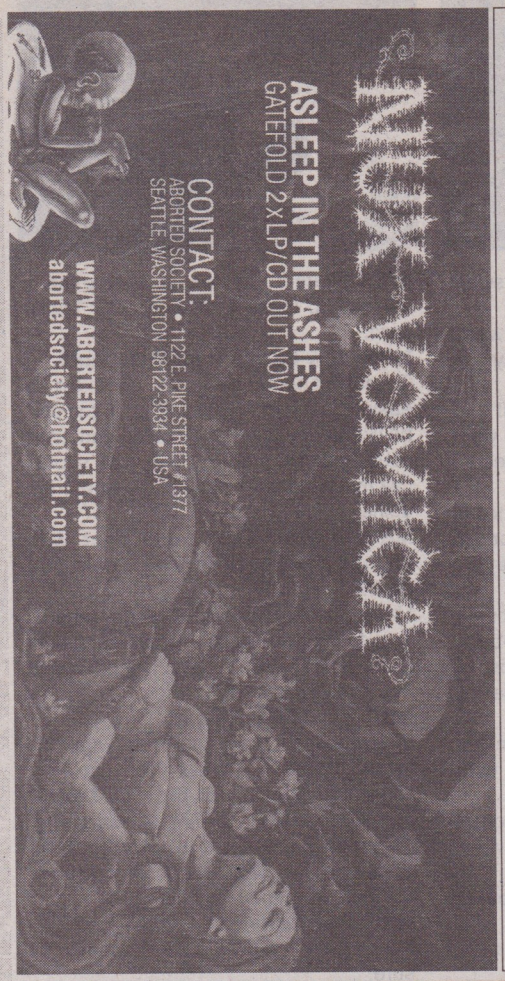

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RÁKOSI

Rákosi is written with an accent over the "a," making you dwell on it a little longer and adding a little more emphasis... Besides the more known meaning of the name discussed below, there exists a stream near Budapest called Rákos patak which is home of a deadly viper that locals call Rákosi vipera. You'd be right to think this is a fitting name for Rákosi, the band. Their music blasts with both the eeriness of a snakelike predator as well as the bite of a venomous reptile. But unlike a snake, these four Magyars are very much warm-blooded—soaked in the sweat and discontent of "post-hope" '00s Hungary.

Hailing from the vast Hungarian plains where post-industrial grays meet with the dregs of those agricultural yellows and browns, Rákosi provides a harsh, brittle soundtrack for post-socialist-yet-depressingly-capitalistic Central European grit and realism. Named after the ever-reviled Hungarian dictator Mátyás Rákosi, their songs are drenched with a certain grime and harshness. These songs are marked most prominently with the acidic vocal delivery of Csoki Rákosi—his voice scratches like sandpaper over a fierce and unrelenting melee of punky hardcore and tells of local lore and bitter truths of a grim past and present. Yet amidst the grit and jarringly disturbing tales of local lore that stretch a well-blazed trail from Budapest to Mezőtúr to Szeged, there is an enthusiasm and drive in this music; all tightly wound up in a healthy mess of impending nihilism and excitement that Rákosi (individually and as a band) internalizes and thrives upon.

I met most of the members of Rákosi before this band formed, when they played in other bands, but somehow this newest group seems the most sincere and authentic of all of the Hungarian bands I have yet discovered. There is something seething in the music that just touches the nerve of where these guys are coming from—the Hungarian "puszta."

Rákosi is:
Gepárd – Guitar
Attila – Bass
Csoki – Vocals
Máté – Drums

Interview by Spencer Rangitsch
Photos by Nora Varga, Milan Kara and Tamas Bernath.

MRR: Tell us a little about how this band started and how all of you ended up playing together?

Gepárd: Máté and me have had this band in mind for about two years. At first we just wanted to play in the vein of hardcore bands like Outspoken and Unbroken—just for our own pleasure and entertainment, you know. In the very beginning there were just the two of us playing guitar to each other and there wasn't much of a chance to find the right guys for drums, bass, and vocals, so Máté took the great leap and started to learn how to play drums. I don't know whose idea it was to migrate towards simple thrashy punk. We started to rehearse with Csoki on bass and vocals, but it didn't really work out. Then we just had drums, guitar, and vocals. We even had a few appearances with this line-up, but we were not too convincing. After that, Kobera (Hátsó Szándék, Something Against You, Ninpulators) offered his services on bass, but he could not deal with the measure of his assignment and backed out. Luckily I could convince Attila to fill in. This is an awesome band. I'm happy to play with my best friends again and I don't have to take the practices and shows too seriously.

Attila: As I remember, Gepárd called me on the phone to fill in on bass for a few shows... This band was not really what I had in mind for myself as I barely knew anything about it, but I played one show and realized that this is what's really truly pure and fun and punk—all of that together. From then on, no one ever brought up if we should find somebody else to play bass. As I remember, this was the time when the name Rákosi was solidified.

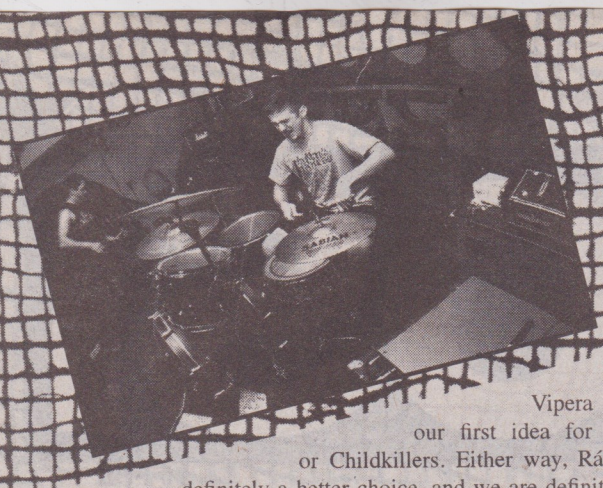
MRR: What's the idea behind the name? I've heard some of you say that this is a "joke band," but what do you mean by that?

Csoki: We wanted a name that people just cannot simply ignore. In most Hungarian circles, the name Rákosi sounds similar in terms of shock value to what Hitler may sound like in Germany nowadays. Mátyás Rákosi is a controversial figure of Hungarian history. He was the leader of the Soviet puppet government reigning Hungary between 1952 and 1953, but was pretty much the most dominant political figure of post-WWII Hungary until just before the '56 revolution. That said, you can still feel the legacy of his dictatorship nowadays.

Attila: Yeah, because basically he became an emblematic figure of the controversy of Soviet-type communism. He represented everything but what communism should stand for at the first place. Like the pigs of Orwell, you know. It is not a coincidence that Rákosi was often referred to as "Stalin's best pupil."

MRR: Yeah, he even referred to himself that way at the time and loved the compliment! So this is really a tribute you're continuing with the band name, right? *(laughs)*

Gepárd: Actually, at first we didn't even want to have a name. We thought that we would just show up at gigs uninvited, take over the stage, and play. After few successful "coups" we started to receive invitations so we had to have a name. I can't remember completely...maybe



Rákosi Vipera was our first idea for a name, or Childkillers. Either way, Rákosi was definitely a better choice, and we are definitely not a joke band, by the way.

Attila: It's not a joke band in the classic sense. I think what we all laugh about is the comparatively small amount of relative effort we have put into this band. Most of us have played in various bands in which we tried hard to play as good as we can and write good, thoughtful lyrics. Now we decided to just go at our own pace and it seems to really work. We write simple songs and I don't think that it takes more than ten minutes to pen down a few lines of lyrics—raw and honest. The whole thing is just more spontaneous and natural. So that part is unusual to us, almost like it was an inside joke.

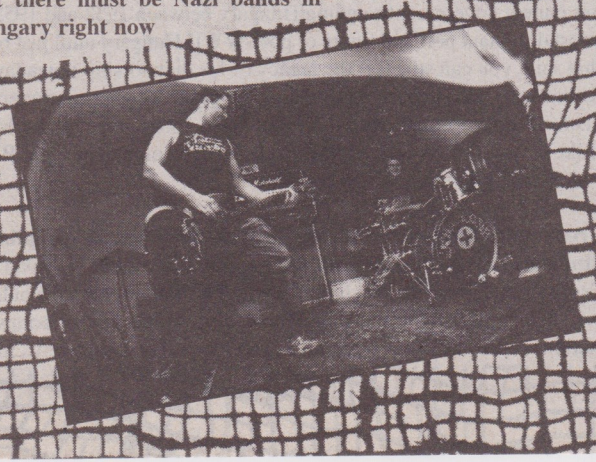
MRR: From what I've heard, there's been some light controversy or tension within "the scene" about the name. Obviously some of this controversy is intentional, so what's been the story so far?

Csoki: The band name is intentionally provocative. It is pretty much a given that upon hearing the name Rákosi, people have question marks hanging around their heads. Nevertheless, I did not hear about anything too special in terms of controversy.

Gepárd: Me neither, besides my mom who keeps telling me, "You are out of your mind, son! You will be put into jail for this!"

Attila: See the good old reflex: "You will be put into jail for this!" I guess this is what Csoki meant when he said that the legacy of the Rákosi-era is still detectable. Anyway, I've seen some raised eyebrows after mentioning the name, but no serious confrontation. The right wing is on the rise now in Hungary, and I'm pretty sure that the upcoming election will put a few Nazi fucks in the government, so we'll have a bigger chance to be confronted. I won't mind that too much, to be honest. It is pretty much one of my goals in life: being arrested for playing in a band. That would mean that I do it right! *(laughs)*

MRR: Well, isn't the issue though that in naming your band after such a detested character, and also one that represented the face of so-called "communism" in Hungary, that the average person (and especially the average idiot) might not know whether you are celebrating that person by naming your band after him or not? I can't help thinking here of that Japanese band the Stalin who even toured Eastern Europe in the '80s with that name! Imagine what that would have been like! And they were all more-or-less anti-Stalinist leftists/anarchist punks! Plus, I'm sure that there must be Nazi bands in Hungary right now who would use the image of Szálasi (famous Hungarian Nazi) with more of a sense of serious admiration! So, to me it seems like the name and your use of it almost becomes a sort of clusterfuck monkeywrench thrown into all the endless symbolic battles over history in Hungary which rage on and on. After all, the Nazis in Hungary you just mentioned are probably more vocally "anti-communist"—whatever that means now—than they are anything else. So where does this put you guys?

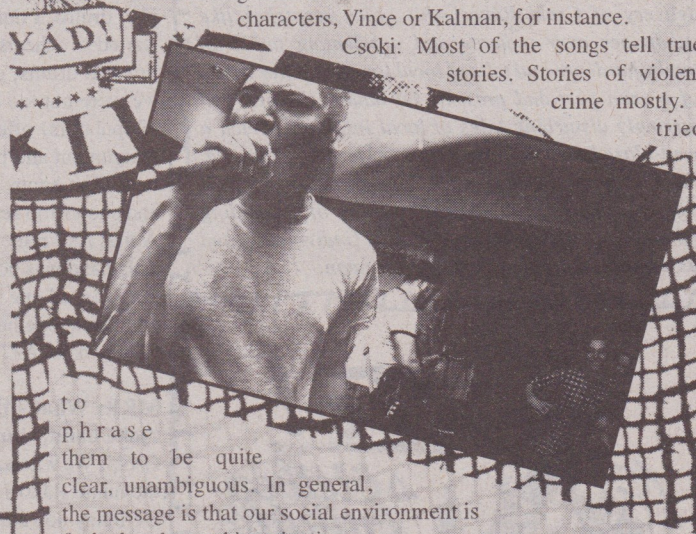


Attila: This is pretty much what we mean by provocative reasons for the band name. To stick to your example, there are people indeed who have the nerve to wear the portrait of Szalasi (former leader of the Nazi collaborative government of Hungary in 1944-1945) on their t-shirt and it is a fact that nothing else but admiration is what they want to express. So now we have a band named after a person most hated in *those* circles. They are most welcome to get pissed. And so is anybody who would think that we chose this name because of nostalgic feelings for the person and the era.

MRR: Let's talk about the lyrics. What are you guys talking about in these songs? I notice some recurring themes for sure, but I'd like to hear you talk about some of the stories and motifs that come up and what you're trying to say with putting them to thrashy music?

Gepárd: Our lyrics deal with local stories and one should not look too hard for metaphors in them. Not much time is spent writing them and the same applies to the music. I believe that the most striking compositions result from acting on a sudden, immediate impulse.

Attila: Right, but the lyrics are not only simple, crude bursts of anger. They are written in a kind of authentic tongue. In Hungarian, they sound like a story told by some hick in the local dive bar. As a matter of fact, some of our lyrics are actual documentations of such overheard stories. We all have a subtle accent compared to the Hungarian they speak in Budapest, and Csoki didn't even try to conceal that on the recording so you have the feeling that you are listening to some drunk local fuckhead, like some of our characters, Vince or Kalman, for instance.



Csoki: Most of the songs tell true stories. Stories of violent crime mostly. I tried to phrase them to be quite clear, unambiguous. In general, the message is that our social environment is fucked up beyond imagination.

Attila: Yeah, quite a surprise from a punk band, right? *(laughs)* I think that the words are unique in a way—they introduce the listener to the dark, sad reality of everyday life in a small town of Hungary. They make people realize that the same things happen in a small town as an urban environment, but the participants have real names. They may live next door or there's a chance that you know the guy from high school. Urban life is much less personal. In cities such stories may hit the news but then get forgotten shortly after. Here in more rural Hungary there is more of a local memory, for better and for worse, as the lyrics show.

MRR: What is "Jászkunság" all about? Is it sort of an ode to the

plains where you guys are from?

Csoki: This song deals with how humanity constantly changes its environment. Jászság and Nagykunság, our home territories, used to be floodplains, woody marshlands. Then, enormous river regulations, comparable only with those in the Netherlands and the former Soviet Union, completely eradicated the natural vegetation and fauna leaving us with a cultivated desert.

Gepárd: Being a mostly impassable maze this territory was quite convenient for bandits and other outlaws, generally referred to as *betyárok*. The law couldn't easily reach them there and they often enjoyed the support of local inhabitants. So there are references in our songs to these people and these times.

MRR: How about the song "Egri Jóska"? And could you also tell *MRR*'s readers about Farkas Csapó Gyurka and Mérges Balázs, two of the other characters in this song?

Gepárd: Egri Jóska was the most hell-bent cop in my hometown, Mezőtúr. He was feared and respected around town. I got my biggest slap in the face from him, when I was fifteen. That happened at 10 PM, but my face was still red in the morning. Maybe we need more cops like him in this country! *(laughs)* Farkas Csapó Gyurka and Mérges Balázs were the main characters of a movie (translation: *Wind Blows Under Their Feet)* depicting the old times of the *betyárok* mentioned above. I'm not sure if they really existed with those names or not.

Máté: I didn't get slapped by Egri Jóska, like Csoki and Gepárd, but I'm truly with them on this. Only fucking morons join the ranks of the police nowadays, who have no clue what to do with their lives or are just too stupid or lazy to figure something else out. They are plain assholes, now trained to be even bigger fucking assholes. Asshole champions. The life of a small town precinct cop is a joke. In earlier times they were assholes as well, but it was safe to walk on the streets. Now, if you take a walk with your girlfriend who wears a miniskirt, the cops are the first to honk at her or drop unwanted comments.

Attila: To serve and protect, you know. To serve and protect the reigning system and harass the citizens. This is even more pronounced nowadays, than it was in the time of Egri Jóska. Public safety is gone and there is absolutely no criminal investigation. All we have left is riot control and speeding tickets.

MRR: So, with all this local folklore in the songs, these stark true-to-life stories, it seems like Rakosi is a different sort of "folk punk." What do you think?

Máté: Yes, in a way...

Gepárd: I think so too. *(laughs)*

Attila: A folk punk band with no violins or fuckin' drinking songs, haha.

MRR:

Looking over the lyrics for the demo and the sort of folklore you were just talking about there is definitely a recurrent theme/depiction of a really masochistic and misogynistic society—these being some pretty grim, fucked up violent depictions of violence against women. Are these stories merely an extreme expression of certain societal tendencies, or do they also perhaps reflect the generally more fucked up misogynistic/patriarchal tendency of rural life in a country like Hungary? I mean, what are you really trying to get across with lyrics like that or what do you think you *are* getting across with these lyrics?

Attila: I wouldn't make a gender issue about this, as it is merely a coincidence on our terms. Furthermore, this is not the only question those songs may raise. In fact, there are lots of questions. For example, what were the circumstances that actually led to the events described in those songs? Poverty? Hopelessness? Marginalization? No access to proper education, health care etc? Or some other social misery? Rákosi is not here to answer or even to formulate these questions. We just provide the seed to those thoughts and questions and people are most welcome to start to think about it. That's all we want to do; to expose people to the dark side of reality and make them start to think about it! Indeed, we have an opinion and it might come through here or there, but it is not our intention to disseminate prefab ideas. These issues are more complex than that.

MRR: Right, but going back to my question…

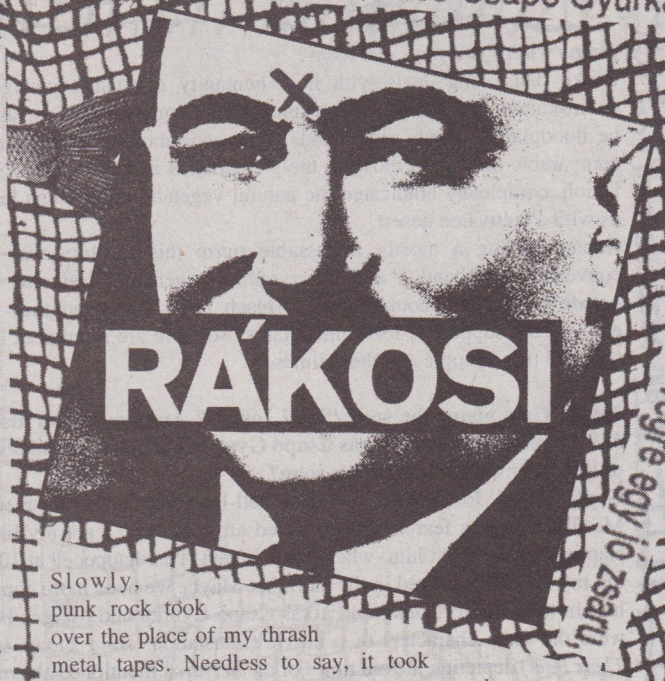
Attila: Alright. So is Hungarian society patriarchal in general? Of course it is. I don't want to take measures or make comparison to the rest of the world, but I think we are in the same league. It is not much more extreme as in Western cultures, I think, but you are right about the correlation between this tendency and the location/social situation in Hungary. Of course you hear about more domestic violence incidents is less developed territories than in more affluent communities. You are right about that. It is quite obvious and people here are aware of it, as many of us actually came from families like that, including me. But I think our lyrics are far, far beyond those cliché depictions of misogyny and patriarchy. In these songs we are speaking not merely about women treated unfairly, but about total, absolute *barbarism*! You know what I mean? I think that confining this to simply a gender issue simply does not describe the situation accurately. It even sounds like a total understatement. I hope you understand what I'm trying to say.

MRR: OK. Lastly as far as lyrics, tell us about "Vallás" ("Religion"). Are the lyrics only directed at religion, or do they also express a bit of your own pessimism about the world too?

Gepárd: It's not really pessimistic. Musically, maybe.
Attila: Yeah, there is an extent of bitterness and nihilism in us, but I don't think it is beyond the general attitude of the punk scene. The song is a simple outburst against the fallacies of religion. I guess all of us have slightly different opinions about it and each of us could go and talk about our personal reasons of why we are atheists, but generally I don't think it needs a detailed explanation.

MRR: This one's for Csoki. Are you as angry in real life as your voice sounds on the recording? Because—and I'm really being honest and serious here—you have some of the most genuinely angry-sounding vocals I have heard in a long time.
Csoki: I'm quite frustrated in life, but what could I do? Howl all day long? No, I save all that shit for Rákosi and I go out to the river. That's when I'm completely relaxed, when I'm out in nature, you know...

MRR: Can each of you talk about how you discovered punk in Hungary? Maybe give the readers a bit of an idea of what it's been like through the years to be a punk in Hungary?
Gepárd: I was about ten years old, when I first heard punk rock. It was a Hungarian "funny-punk" band. Then I got *Dookie* from Green Day for my 12th birthday *(laughs)*. That was a big thing for me at the time. I did not really identify myself with the Hungarian punks of the '90s though. It was all about formalities, the looks, seeking trouble, and intoxication. There were so many guys and girls wearing mohawks that no one paid attention to them anymore, so most of them disappeared when they got a bit older. Around the age of 16-17 I got interested in hardcore punk, although the hardcore scene of that time was not so tolerant towards the classic punk attitude. Weird as it sounds, it was pretty much a pissing contest—who is more straight edge, more vegan, or more "radical"? It was around that time that I got the Minor Threat discography on tape and that is the gold standard for me to this day.
Máté: I think that most of small-town guys discover punk rock as I did. You hear something on TV or the radio that resembles punk rock, you dig it, and you start to look for it. Then you dig down to the roots, and so on. There's a smaller chance that you'll get introduced to punk rock by your peers. And you know it is awesome to realize that there are so many kids who went through this. You meet these guys at shows, read their zines and you want more and more. Unfortunately, I don't have any interesting stories about bands being arrested or school kids taken from classes to be interrogated by the police.
Attila: It was pretty much the same for me, although it started a bit earlier than the other guys. It was around the end of '80s when I got hooked on a radio show airing hard rock and metal, which I was really keen of as a kid.
Off and on, this show featured songs from bands
like the Ramones—that's when
I got hooked.



Slowly,
punk rock took
over the place of my thrash
metal tapes. Needless to say, it took
an arm and a leg at that time to get some decent
punk rock. One source was the marketplace, where Polish merchants sold bootleg tapes. Another source was to send blank tapes to friends in another town to copy some music for you and you also made copies for them in return. In the late '80s /early '90s punk was not persecuted any more, but it was still not very popular at all. Maybe in Budapest there was something people may call a scene, but my hometown was the dark medievals compared to that!

MRR: All of you guys live in Mezőtúr or Szeged, right? What is it like in those towns as opposed to how things are in Budapest? Is there a more separate and different sort of punk scene? What's life like on the *puszta* (Hungarian plains)?
Attila: Yeah, I live in Szeged and like it. I'm a small town guy and this is a city of tolerable size. Budapest would be too crowded and too impersonal for me. I visit the capital often, mostly for shows, but I always enjoy returning home.
Gepárd: As for the hardcore punk scene, it is centered in Budapest, like everything else in this country. It is difficult even in Budapest to put on shows without losing shitloads of money, but it is more miserable in smaller towns. Off and on a few rural towns become popular. Local guys put on shows and people go there from the surrounding areas. Usually it doesn't last too long. Mostly because of venue availability issues or the lack of financial resources from the promoter. Anyway, I'm not too happy with the Hungarian hardcore punk music scene. I can count on my two hands how many bands play good music and represent the punk attitude the way I like it. In our region there is definitely no significant interest in this subculture.
Attila: Yeah, we can't really speak of a vibrant hardcore punk scene in Szeged or any of the towns of this country. Yes, there are a few real enthusiasts in each place, but that doesn't make a scene. There are bands here and there, and concerts are organized frequently, but the attendance is always low. We often travel around. When some friends play or organize a show in a nearby town, Szentes for example, we get in a car and go. When there is a gig in Szeged, dudes from Szentes or Hódmezővásárhely show up. Sometimes people come from Vojvodina in Serbia. And it still doesn't make more than about 70 people at the door count. Furthermore, there are at least 50 people in Szeged who consider themselves associated

with the punk scene, but you never see all 50 at one show. They just go to see bands that they know and like. They are not too adventurous, or maybe they are just lazy, or narrow minded, or not too dedicated, or assholes, or...I don't know. I have many good friends around here, but there's no scene that I associate myself with.

Gepárd: I go to shows less often these days, so my view may be not the most enlightened, but the Hungarian scene was always small. Luckily, there are always a few enthusiastic, dedicated guys who shoulder the difficulties of organizing punk rock shows. As all over the world, the generation of 18-to-24-year-old people is the most enthusiastic, but many of them leave the scene as they "grow up"—like it never existed, never happened.

MRR: So what about that? Does that seem like an inevitable thing to you?

Gepárd: I guess those people are old enough to know what is most important for them, you know....

Attila: I never swore an oath to stick to punk rock until the day I die. It just happened that most of my free time is still spent on punk rock. I'm okay with this. It seems that I grew up with punk instead of growing out of it. But back to your previous question, I think the scene is much better these days than it was in the early '90s. I'm still not satisfied though. Well, I'm never satisfied, I guess. I think a lot about it. I keep reading message boards, 'zines and I try to collect other people's opinions and distill it to see the whole picture. Now what I see is everybody works 9-to-5, lives a normal life, and they cannot escape being average, voting citizens. They look at this subculture as recreation, entertainment. I miss some extent of idealism. Or maybe idealism is not the right term. I miss people who dare to look further than this society we live in. At least in their thoughts... I miss people formulating new or radical ideas either in music or in their view of life. I think apart from a few exceptions the punk scene is just like the whole society here: jaded, ignorant. They'd rather just embrace the mainstream agenda. When elections come, punks are busy discussing which major party's candidate they should vote for. Even though they hate both they go for the less bad, and they get into heated debates over it. It's like, who the fuck cares? Fuck both for fuck's sake! Draw a fucking dick on the ballot, you moron! Yeah, that won't make much difference, it won't change the world, you're right! Then go, check the box next to your choice of "less bad," and wait until the world fixes itself. This is just one example, but I have many more.

MRR: Were there many punks tearing shit apart in those now-infamous riots that happened in Budapest in 2006?

Attila: Whoever is rioting usually either has a really strong feeling, or at least an articulate opinion that doesn't really change with the wind. What I'm saying is that most people in "the scene" these days seems to have a weak opinion, or no opinion at all. Trying to be "reasonable" and to "play safe" all the time. Just plain ignorant may also be the right word.

MRR: What do all of you do outside of the band?

Gepárd: I live a very common life. I work as an engineer. I run a small steel workshop in my hometown. I spend much time with my sweetheart and I go fishing whenever I have the chance.

Attila: Regular things here too. I live with my girlfriend, so we are together most of the time. I deal with things of everyday life, go to shows, run twice or three times a week, read a lot, try to catch up with things I ignored in the first 30 years of my life, write music and lyrics for my other band, try to figure out how to record music properly, I guess that's about it. As for work, I am a chemist and I work as a researcher. Some traveling comes with this.

Máté: I'll graduate this year as a biologist. After that I will end up most likely as a research assistant or a PhD student at the Microbiology department at the university in Szeged.

Csoki: I just graduated as a wildlife engineer. Besides school I used to work as a ranger/game warden, but I quit recently. They fucked me over. I just hung around for awhile, studied English and went out to fish whenever the river was not flooding or covered by ice. Now I'm back at work. I work for the Environmental Protection and Water Authority as a ranger.

MRR: What do you guys hope to accomplish with this band? Are you working on any new material? Any tour plans?

Attila: Actually, we will record some more tunes in the next couple of weeks. We have never played outside the country, but we would. Up to this point we have never imagined that anybody would give a damn about us outside of Hungary. We don't have any solid plans but it appears that some good friends are willing to take us on a short EU trip this summer. We'll see.

Gepárd: Basically the band accomplished way more than it set out to. It still feels a bit surreal that previously we invested so much energy and time in our bands and we did not make a dent. Not that it worries us, but it is just weird that now we've made a scrappy demo and guys on the other end of the globe like it and we are being interviewed for *Maximum Rocknroll*. It is awesome, but still quite a surprise for me. I have to visit your country and catch a few muskies, haha!

MRR: You guys have a record coming out on Lengua Armada Discos, which is a pretty reputable label as far as DIY punk here in the US, but punks don't really listen to vinyl in Hungary too much. Your comment?

Attila: I guess I speak for the others when I say that we are very happy and also quite shocked that our music made it that far. Vinyl is indeed less popular here than in the US. Actually, I won't say that people are not interested in it. People would happily buy local music on vinyl if it were available. Why is it not available in most cases? Mostly economic reasons. This country has a small scene. Popular local bands sell about 100-200 copies. You know that vinyl starts to be more economically viable when you have at least 300 copies pressed, which is still quite an investment. But I'm quite positive that we won't have stacks of records laying around our flats for too long.

Gepárd: We couldn't sell too many CDs with our previous bands either, so I don't have such high hopes as Attila. We'll see. If we go on tour we'll be fine I guess.

MRR: What do all of you love most about being in this band?

Gepárd: I love to play music with my friends; that's all.

Attila: I assume it is pretty much the same for all of us. This is pure fun. It is us, it is ours. It is rural, like we are.

Rákosi only has one self-made recording so far—a demo that was distributed on CDR within Hungary, released on cassette in short-run by Combat Action Tapes out of Canada, and most recently pressed as a 7" EP by California's Lengua Armada Discos. Get it while the blood is still warm.

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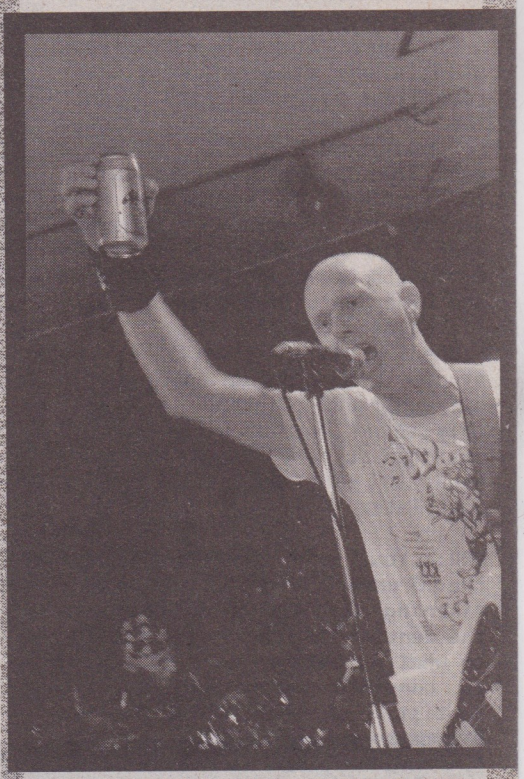
WANKYS



Interview by Tony Gunnarsson done in two sessions (before the Wankys went to Japan and after they got back).

MRR: Remember what you said before—that if *MRR* starts covering the Wankys you might start buying it again—I think many others will agree with that.
Fuckin' hell, I can see what this interview is going to be like! "Hey Mark, remember when you said this, remember when you said that?" Haha. I stopped getting *MRR* several years ago because it was very apparent that the writers/reviewers lacked knowledge on the subject matter of punk, which is quite a problem for a punk fanzine; essentially for me it stopped being a medium for learning. Having said that, I did read a copy about three months ago and saw a vast improvement. But anyway I'm fucking chuffed that they have decided to include the Wankys (unless they change their minds), which I'm sure will mean that *MRR* will sell as many copies as *More Noise Fanzine*.

MRR: Did you get the last issue of *MRR*, with D-Clone on the cover? Seems there's starting to be some more interest in over-the-top noisy punk, what do you think?
Wow! I have not seen that issue. I think I need to buy it. I did pick up the issue of *Short Fast & Loud* with them on the cover (though no interview inside). If *MRR* has started showing interest in noisy punk then that's great. Actually I don't think it's great, I think it's fantastic. This month the Wankys in *MRR*, next month the Wankys on Warped Tour. Isn't that how it works?

MRR: So, from having started over two years ago as a one-man band playing noise celebrating the Kyushua Island and Bristol connection of punk, at the end of 2009 the Wankys is almost like what in the mainstream music world is called "a major recording and touring band." What happened? I mean, the Wankys' trademark "sound" is not exactly easy listening!
For people that don't know the origins of the band, it started one rainy Sunday (actually over three years ago) when I was bored and thinking that nobody is playing like Disorder/Chaos UK/Chaotic Discord/Gai/Swankys... Anyway I recorded a four-song demo on a four-track porta-studio and it went from there. Pretty crazy for me that we have kept this going for three years and that the offers of gigs/tours/records keep coming our way. I feel humbled, flattered and motivated by it. Yeah it's not easy listening, we still clear rooms and we still record demos on an old analog four-track.

MRR: What's the news with the *Weapons of Musical Destruction* 8"? I saw that it will be ready in early January 2010. I remember about a year ago now you told me about your idea of doing something similar to that Kuro release, with a paper bag and a magazine, etc. Is that still the idea for this 8"?
We are just finishing it off now. The package will be an 8" in a hand stamped sandwich bag, with a twelve-page magazine called the *Wank Mag* (slang British term for a porno magazine), and the whole lot will be housed in a screenprinted manila envelope.

MRR: This recording (which is included on both the Japan and the USA discography CDs that came out in the autumn of 2009) is among the most violent recordings I have ever heard. The guitar sound is absolutely extreme white noise, and not surprisingly painful to listen to, haha! How do you think the vinyl version comes through?
We were a little worried about cramming so much music onto an 8" slab of wax and expected it to run at 33 rpm, but it actually runs at 45 (louder than 33). I'm very happy with the guitar sound on it and the overall mastering, as we are with all of our releases apart from the split with Syphilitic Vaginas (substandard recording). If we were not happy it would be remastered or

remain unreleased.

Of course I really don't know if it's one of the most violent recordings ever made. That wasn't the intention. We just wanted to make some more catchy noise punk that people can sing along to, not push any musical or non-musical boundaries. Remember that I'm somebody that finds Confuse's *Spending Loud Night* EP and Disorder's *Perdition* 12" easy listening.

When we were recently in the studio I was doing some guitar overdubs and thinking to myself this sound is ridiculous–this is just too much for anyone to bear, haha! My ears are still ringing days later.

MRR: You said something about the drummer from Terveet Kadet likening the Wankys to going to the dentist! Which is also similar to what my partner said in trying to convince me to got to the dentist last week: "You'll love it, it will be just like listening to your music!"

That must be tough having such a witty girlfriend–I'm sure she never misses a trick with you, eh? Pedro said something like, "Listening to the Wankys is like a visit to the dentist without anesthetic," which I took as a huge compliment. Others from various people include, "Your vocals are the worst I have heard in my life," "That was the worst thing I have heard in my life," "That was painful," the list is endless really. I'm happy if people think our band is shit, as I'm happy if they love us. I find indifference hard to take; it's like we need to be trying much harder.

MRR: You were going to try to get the studio (Studio Forcefed) where you recorded most of the Wankys stuff re-opened? Did this happen? How did it go?

In the end it wasn't too much effort for him to get it running again as his band Toecutter recently recorded a new demo there. Anyway, a guy called Duane who plays in lots of bands like Diet Pills and Toecutter, and is even helping with live guitars for Geriatric Unit at the moment, has done all our studio stuff. We are very happy with what he has recorded for us and without him we'd be at a loss where to record. I trust him to record our stuff–he has a special ear for finding the sounds that we want and I am grateful to him for getting his studio running again. It's pretty much a DIY place and not pro, so recording there is not really comfortable, but the results speak for themselves.

He complains that we are noisy bastards, haha!

We recently recorded seven songs but we still need to find time to mix it (hopefully soon) and if we are satisfied the end result will be used for a split 7" with Lotus Fucker and a new EP. The songs on the split are typical Wankys stuff, but the songs on the EP are all wanky punk rock songs and include a re-recording of "Hey Crusty." For some time I have wanted to do a straight punk EP with the Wankys, but writing/arranging catchy punk songs is much harder that writing standard hardcore songs. This is not a new direction for the band, just something that we have done.

MRR: In the next week or so the Wankys is off on a tour of Japan with Chaos Channel. How did it come about? I know you will be playing with some of the most exciting bands I can think of like Stagnation, Zyanose, No Futures, the Swindles, Order, and many others.

We hope that the Japanese are hungry for us. No. 6, the Chaos Channel singer, has organized it for us and at our request we will have about fifty percent of the time out there as holiday/tourist time, you know,

so the visit is not so superficial, sitting in a van, sitting in a venue type tour. Also I'm pretty sure that I won't have a voice at all if I played six gigs in six nights as it's quite painful for me to sing in this way. I'm super excited about the tour and to be playing with Chaos Channel every night, I'll be as happy as a pig in shit.

MRR: Wank Channel will also play on this tour, which I am sure will go down a storm with the Japanese punk kids. How's the Wank Channel demo getting along? Any chances of getting into a studio while in Japan?

Yes, we'll be doing a Wank Channel set every night, which will include a Wankys song, three Chaotic Discord songs and "ABC I Love Noise Punk," which was a Chaos Channel song, then a Wankys song, now of course a Wank Channel song. Hopefully we'll get some guests to join us for the fun. The first Wank Channel demo will sadly never get finished, though I'd love to do a demo when we are

in Japan, time/money/enthusiasm permitting.

I also did other Wankys collaborations. When in Finland we did a set of Wankys songs under the name of "The Wankys Shit Box Finland" with members of Kuolema and in France I did "Wank Poison" with some guys from State Poison. All good fun! It's amazing that I can plan a holiday to someplace and my friends there will decide to do a Wankys set with me.

MRR: I was just saying the other day that it is always fun to see you play–your shows are always kind of unpredictable. Either everyone walks out because they can't stand or can't understand the noise, or else it turns out to be totally party with all sorts of people

dancing and singing along. How was the recent Dewdrop squat show?

We have been busy with gigs in the past twelve months or so, have taken almost every gig offered to us, and have been very fortunate to play with a lot of really great touring bands. In the future we will go to Berlin (one gig), Holland (three gigs), and the USA for over two weeks. Should all be amazing.

From the very start of the band we decided to rarely play our home city of Leicester even though we have had the offers to play almost every week. We had bigger aspirations and thought we should focus our energy on writing songs and playing outside Leicester, which is why we have been lucky enough to tour outside England so much. This has also been to our detriment as when we play in Leicester only about twenty people turn up.

Dewdrop gig was pretty wild, lots of chaos and punks grabbing the mic to sing along. A few people said to us beforehand that we were treading on dangerous ground with the song "Hey Crusty" and suggested that we shouldn't play it. Fuck that! Hahaha! Thankfully the crusties at the Dewdrop have a sense of humor and didn't throw their sweaty socks at us. It's a superb pub/venue and much respect to the people there.

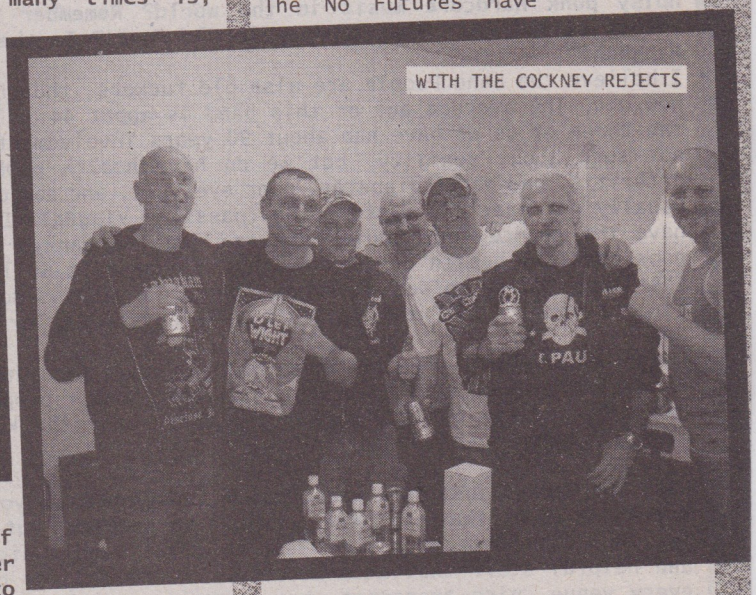
MRR: I was reading through some of our emails from the past two years or so, and many emails are me saying, "Hey Mark, check out this new noise punk band," but more often than not you would say that the band in question is still undeveloped, like the guitar sound is good but there's no good riffs, or that some band sounds more like raw crust than say Gai/Swankys. One thing I have heard you say many times is, "It sounds as if they have never even listened to Disorder." So clearly this idea of "noise punk" is often misunderstood. What is "noise punk"?

To me noise punk is the Wankys; that's what we do. It's about us mixing the sounds of Bristol and Kyushu, like Disorder mixed with Gai, or Chaos UK mixed with the Swankys. Nothing new, nothing original, just those sounds put in our environment of the 21st century and done by us in what I'd like to think is a pure way, without being corrupted/polluted by the sub genre of punk known as crust. I would like to think *our* sound goes something like this:

1. Straightforward drumbeats, one-two, one-two, one-two.
2. Catchy and basic punk rock/ hardcore punk riffs.
3. Obnoxious sounding bass with nice bass lines.
4. Fuzzed guitar.
5. Horrible vocals.

I appreciate that bands don't want to follow that formula; it would be pretty boring if all bands sounded the same. I never had any thoughts that other bands would start using the term noise punk and apply it to themselves; that's up to them. You are correct that I do think that some bands are missing the point. More Screaming Noise/Expose/Chaos Channel and less neo-crust/d-beat/crasher crust.

There are some bands keeping the Bristol/Kyushu sound pure such as Lebenden Toten, Chaos Destroy, People–and it's great to know that Chaos Channel are busy again. I don't know if any of those bands would call themselves noise punk, but to my ears we all play in a similar style with similar influences and they all do a fucking excellent job of it. The No Futures have pushed that pure sound in another direction and State Poison at an opposite angle.



To me people like Steve Allen and Mad/Nakakura are fucking genius songwriters, they are guitar heroes to me and I aspire to write amazing riffs in a similar style. I can overlook poor production, poor musicianship, clichéd lyrics, and I can even usually overlook boring vocals, but I can't overlook zero ability/desire to write even some basic catchy punk riffs. If it's noise for the sake of noise, I probably won't like it (though I might love it live).

MRR: Speaking of which, how's *Downtown Noise Punker Vol. 3* getting along? How has the response been to the comps so far? I have a feeling they have greatly

been passed by the great majority of punk record buyers… to their own misfortune methinks!
Yeah, *Downtown Noise Punker Vol. 3* is almost done and mastered, just waiting on a few bits and bobs. The line-up is Chaos Destroy, Geranium, Formby Channel (basically me and Roddy from Ploppy Pants fanzine, inspired by Chaos Channel and George Formby), State Poison, The Wankys with Mike Chaos Destroy, Lebenden Toten, Nekromantiker, Warning//Warning, Lotus Fucker, and the Wankys. Not all of the bands fit closely to my idea of noise punk, but I think they are all fucking good. The response to the comps has been minimal, though *More Noize* and *Ploppy Pants* fanzines gave them good reviews. A lot of bands contacted me asking to be on future volumes, but 95% of them were unsuitable.

I think that it is very interesting to note that all the bands (to my knowledge) get involved in making/selling/giving away copies of the comps, and they also all trust me with the mastering of their material. I see this home burning of CDRs to be the very epitome of DIY punk rock. Yes, I would agree that the comps pass by the majority of punk record buyers, possibly because people often don't take chances on unknown bands and the CDR format is very unpopular. I also think of them as a nice gift for people that support our band/ buy our releases.

MRR: What is the average age of members in the Wankys? Or rather, what's the total number of years in punk music and punk life of all three members together? Are you the oldest band playing innovative noisy punk hardcore music in the world? Remember that Disorder record called *Rest Home for Senile Old Punks*? Is that the Wankys? Hahahaha.
I believe the band People are also old fuckers, though I've no idea how old. The average age of this band is about 44. I guess between the three of us we have had about 90 years involvement in punk. I'm not sure about senility, but we do have health problems such as arthritis, bad back, diabetes, poor eyesight, and ear damage, though usually not erectile dysfunction (pass the Viagra). I guess if you have the chance you should come and see the Wankys live, because poor physical health or even death could mean it will be the only/ last opportunity to see us, also I can't imagine us doing this band for many more years and we don't have any plans for after the US tour.

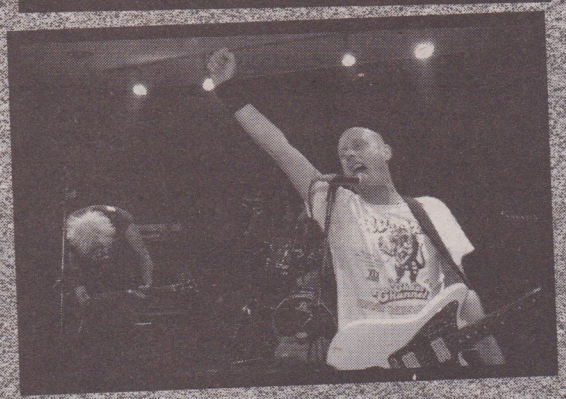
Age is probably more an issue for our audience than us, though recently somebody said to me that usually younger people don't like bands of our age but the Wankys are different, the kids leave our gigs all happy and smiles!

MRR: The Wankys just come back from a Japan tour, do you want to say something about that? Did the terrible noise clear out many venues?
The tour was perfect on many levels, great bands, nice live house and helpful staff that understood our sound, smooth organizing at every venue, nice transport, but most importantly a relaxed group of friends traveling around Japan with mutual quests to make noise and have fun. The downsides would be a huge shift in diet, jetlag, and the weak British pound, but those are outweighed by new and interesting food, beautiful women, amazing sights, Japanese toilets with anal wash, amazing bands blowing you away every night, and generally the warmth and friendship that we were shown by the people we met. Respect to No. 6 for his time and effort organizing the tour!

We didn't clear any venues, possibly because the audience was more used to the sounds of The Wankys and Chaos Channel than say a UK audience. Also we were out-noised every night by Chaos Channel, not forgetting bands such as Struggle For Pride, Stagnation, Abraham Cross, A.I., and Zyanose, who all generate an ungodly racket.

We also visited the A-Bomb Dome/Peace Park/Museum, which will stay with us forever. I experienced a whole range of emotions: shame, anger, disbelief, shock, confusion, but also optimism.

MRR: How did Chaos Channel go down? They're about to release their first album in March I hear, so they must be going for it I reckon.
Chaos Channel is doing something new and exciting; as they say themselves they are no longer "noise core" but are now just "noise." I remember in about '88 I used to see Godflesh a lot. I loved them. They really assaulted the senses of the audience who mostly found it hard to take, but after a year or so people got into it. I think



there is a similar thing going down with Chaos Channel. I really can't describe the noise that they generate, but it is something special and I think the audience was stunned by it, as indeed I was on the first night of the tour. Their album should be outstanding (I have only heard unfinished mixes). They are putting so much time/effort/thought/money into it and they still have a few more layers of noise to record. Providing they can keep a line-up I think we'll be hearing a lot more from Chaos Channel in the coming years. They did ask me to join and as much as I would love to do it, I don't think it will happen.

MRR: Oh, and you've also picked up some new bands for your compilation. Who are the new bands? When will the compilation be out and how will people be able to get it?
Chaos Channel, Stagnation, and People—three of the best bands in the world. How happy do you think I am? I think I need to find time to go to a pro studio and master the whole comp, so, sorry, no timescale at the moment.

MRR: The dates for the Wankys US tour were "announced" the other day. I know Dan from Lotus Fucker has been principal in setting this up and you'll be touring with Lotus Fucker and Chaos Destroy etc. All of whom I understand are more into anime cartoons than hardcore alcohol abuse, so I figure the tour will be a tad different from touring with Kuolema or Giftgasattack!
Dan is doing all the organizing for the US tour and I have total faith that he will do an excellent job. I'm happy to put the control in the hands of somebody other than myself. The only things I asked of Dan were a non-smoking car and some rest days. Since it was announced many people got in touch with me offering to set up a gig in their city, which I take as a good sign that there is some interest in the band. I don't really have many expectations about touring the US. I imagine some venues might be smaller than what we are used to, possibly a lot of house gigs, maybe some all ages/no-drinking venues. Just one soda! Personally I never had any desire to go to the US, but we were given this opportunity and our drummer was really keen, so we would be stupid to say no. I mean, we are old guys and have been given the chance to travel the East Coast of the US with our punk band; how cool is that?

Lotus Fucker album is amazing, can't wait to see them live, same with Chaos Destroy, I love that band. If those guys don't drink then great, because there will be more alcohol for us.

The drunken/drugged-up tours we have done Kuolema/Giftgasattack/State Poison/Chaos Channel have all been a lot of fun, but also messy when it turns to mass brawling in the streets, people shitting their pants, chaos, confusion, bedlam, and ending up with no place to sleep. But the Active Minds tour we did was also a lot of fun, those guys have a wicked sense of humor and they take nothing harder than a few cups of tea. Talking of tea, the rumors are true that the Wankys do take our own tea bags on tour with us.

MRR: Time for an opportunity to drop final famous words. How can people find out more about the Wankys or get in touch, buy records, etc.?
Thanks to Tony for your continued support, I find you a huge source of inspiration. Also thanks to *MRR* for the opportunity to spread the propaganda of the noise punk. I don't have anything else to add. People can check out our stuff on our MySpace page, which for all its sins is very useful, or contact us at wankys@hotmail.co.uk.

A good buy is the 35-song *American Wank* CD, which is $10 postpaid in the US from Rescued from Life. Most of our vinyl sells out quickly but if all goes to plan we should have some special vinyl available for the US tour.

THE WANKYS US TOUR 2010
The Wankys + Chaos Destroy
Friday, June 4: Washington, DC
Saturday, June 5: New York, NY
Sunday, June 6: Philadelphia, PA
Monday, June 7: off
Tuesday, June 8: Boston, MA
Wednesday, June 9: Rochester, NY

The Wankys + Lotus Fucker
Friday, June 11: Richmond, VA
Saturday, June 12: Augusta, GA
Sunday, June 13: Raleigh, NC
Monday, June 14: off
Tuesday, June 15: Baltimore, MD
Wednesday, June 16: Cleveland, OH
Thursday, June 17: Chicago, IL
Friday, June 18: Grand Rapids, MI
Saturday, June 19: Lexington, KY
Sunday, June 20: Columbus, OH

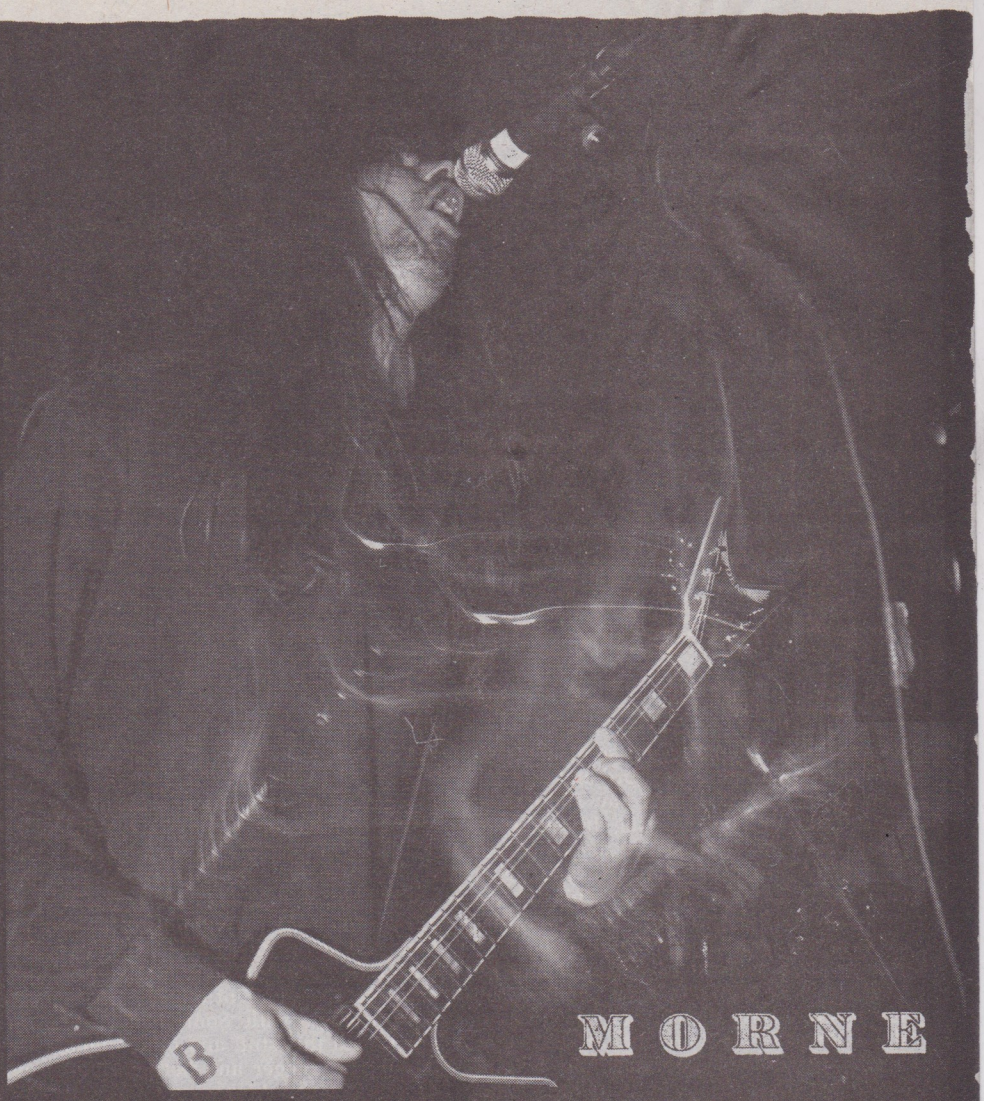
WITH NO. 6 (CROSS CHANNEL)

MORNE

Boston's Morne spent years perfecting their craft before unleashing their sounds upon The Hordes (that's us, The Hordes, in case you were wondering). I heard about the band's progress every time I stopped by Milosz and Sylvia's house on tour (nice spot, by the way, I recommend the soup), and after all of the build up I was honestly surprised when the result was worth all of my anticipation. They make crushingly heavy end-of-time sounds that make me wonder what went wrong with the whole "heavy" music world, because it really should all as good as this, but it simply isn't. Morne are head and shoulders above the rest, their songs take me someplace else, and that's a comment reserved for bands that really deserve it...like Morne. After a self released demo and a split 12" with Warprayer, Feral Ward released a full length and accompanying EP last year, Morne are finally touring outside of the East Coast this June. Consider the West Coast excited.

Interview with Milosz and Max conducted by Robert Collins.

Photos by Milosz



MRR: Morne didn't just bang out a few rehearsals and then start playing live. The early stages of the band actually lasted a couple of years. Can you talk a little bit about the beginning of Morne?

Milosz: I had been trying to form a band almost since I moved to Boston. It was pretty hard. I had a bunch of songs written, I played with some friends for while, but they were always busy with their own bands or they moved away. There was always something. There was even a time when I was thinking about recording all these songs by myself. One day I bumped in to Kevin, we talked little bit, and I asked him if he wanted to play with me. A week later we started to practice. We went through a few bass players. After a while, Max asked me if I wanna start a band with him and I said how about you join my band?

Max: It was all very casual at first. We just started playing at a shitty rehearsal space a couple times each week and it all remained in this shitty rehearsal space for over a year before we ever played live. We just drilled the songs like crazy every week, tweaking and reworking ideas. I feel like things came together pretty fast. Still, we didn't want to waste our time and effort towards playing live unless we could sound the way we wanted to sound, and preferably we wanted to play to an audience who had some idea of what we had to offer. So after we recorded the demo, we tried out a few guitar players and it just didn't click until we met Jeff. Once the recording was released and Jeff joined the band, we finally felt ready to perform live.

MRR: I know Milosz was in Filth of Mankind and I'll address that later, but had other members of the band played together before? There is a distinct musical direction and I'm wondering if it was difficult to achieve this if this was your first band together.

Max: I had been trying to start a band on my own at the time I joined Morne. Boston was a total dry well for finding people to play with at that time unless you happen to float within certain circles. When I crossed paths with Milosz, it just seemed like we had very similar ideas and goals with music. And after hearing some rehearsal tapes of a few songs, I knew this was definitely something I wanted to be part of. The hardest thing to overcome while achieving anything with this band has always been our personalities. But musically, we're all more or less on the same page.

MRR: Talking of previous bands, in addition to Filth of Mankind, Morne's pedigree is pretty intense, with your current members having played in bands as varied as Grief and Avail, with plenty of others in between. I know that Morne doesn't play up these connections, there's no need to really, but do you find that the "members of" thing works out to your advantage? Obviously, if you put "ex-Grief" on a flyer then people are going to show up, but they might show up with a very specific idea of what to expect. I can imagine that it's frustrating if you have a room full of people all expecting different things from Morne, based solely on bands that you guys used to play in.

Milosz: I have to say that it is a little bit annoying. Just because we have members of Grief or Filth of Mankind doesn't mean that we sound like any of those bands. A while ago I saw something that we are ex-Disrupt. Ok, Jeff was in Disrupt, but I don't think our music has anything to do with it. I wrote most of our music so far and I wrote the majority of Filth of Mankind's music, but it doesn't mean we are ex-Filth of Mankind. I guess people like tags and maybe that helps them navigate around all those bands out there. We are trying to stay away from the "ex" thing as much as we can, but I'm sure we will be ex-something for a while.

Max: Honestly, the "ex-band" label tends to gets under my skin a bit as well. Maybe I am saying this because I'm the only one in the band without an ex-member tag to my name, but generally I feel like it gives people wrong expectations of who we are and what we have to offer. When I hear someone describe any band as ex-this-or-that, it very rarely has any sort of appeal to me, so I worry that people think this is something we're riding intentionally. Sad but true, I can say that in the beginning it worked in our favor more times than not. Now it just sort of frustrates me on a personal level when I feel these tags are overshadowing Morne as its own entity in some way. I have a tremendous amount of respect for all my bandmate's previous bands, but those are all things of the past. I hope that over time the ex-labels will fade and Morne will be able to stand on it's own in more people's eyes, but I guess it's mostly up to us to prove this.

MRR: The demo came out in 2008 and No Options Records pressed it on vinyl in pretty limited quantities. Why was there such a long gap between the demo and the full length released last year on Feral Ward?

Max: No Options contacted us about the vinyl pretty soon after we posted a few demo songs on the internet. The limited release aspect of it was a compromise of sorts. We released the demo ourselves on CD and cassette in mid-2008 and had *no* intention to put out this recording as a proper vinyl release. This was because we always knew we were going to re-record these songs at some point. The demo was really just a rough draft of an idea we wouldn't see through completion until we did the full length. Even after the demo, we continued to rehearse and tweak these ideas so that by the time we went to re-record these songs, they had further evolved from that initial demo. I think the year gap between releases is mostly due also to the other things we were doing as a band at that time (touring, writing, etc).

MRR: Speaking of the record on Feral Ward, there were rumors that Relapse was interested in putting the record out, and if this is true, why did you decide to go with a "smaller" label, especially when your sound is perhaps just as suited for something more commercial?

Milosz: We were looking for a solid label that will help us put out our record and do it in, I would say, a professional way. There were many different labels offering this and that, but it wasn't really what we needed. Then we got an email from Relapse, they made an offer, we talked with them for while. It was one of a few options we had. I have to say that I had problems with some DIY labels and I thought trying something different may be good for us as long as we are comfortable, and to be honest about it, I asked around about Relapse. How are they and all that stuff? But nobody said anything helpful or smart. Everyone was bitching about them not having a good argument, which I thought was childish. Meanwhile, I talked with Yannick from Feral Ward about doing a record with him. So at this point we had two solid options. We decided that Relapse was no good for us and did the record with Feral Ward, which I think is one of the strongest DIY labels out there. I'm happy with what we did.

Max: The bottom line is that if we signed to a label like Relapse it seemed we might lose more control over our band than we were willing to surrender. So when Feral Ward came into the picture, the choice seemed obvious. We all agreed Feral Ward is one of the most respectable and organized independent labels in existence right now and it's proven to be the right decision for us.

MRR: Do you feel that at some point in the future it might be a good idea for Morne to "move on" to a bigger label, and perhaps therefore a bigger audience? Easy comparisons might be Neurosis, or more recently Kylesa, two bands that started firmly in the punk scene, but then made a relatively organic progression to something else. I'm not trying to get you to confess in advance to selling out or anything like that, but do you ever think that your style of music, and the delivery of that music, might be better suited to a scene beyond punk?

Milosz: It's a tricky question. I can't tell what's gonna happen in a few years. Things are moving pretty fast for us and we are working hard to keep the band moving forward. If there's gonna be a need to move on, and it will be good for the band and comfortable for us, then maybe. I think being on a bigger label can bring some good and some bad things, but it won't change me us a person. Why would it? I definitely won't push for anything like that, there is no reason for it. If it happens, then we will think about it.

Max: We're pretty content with how things are right now, and I agree with Milosz, it's a bit too early to be thinking about "moving on." So giving a sufficient answer to this is difficult. I personally believe there is always room for potential growth with any band if warranted in some way. If/when to take that opportunity is a different story and totally dependent on the situation you are presented with. Some bands jump the shark with this stuff and others ignore the pursuit of "bigger and better" simply out of principal. We don't want to take either of those avenues. As we said before, we can't let general opinions within punk or any clique deter us from doing what we want to do, but we also wouldn't make that transition unless it was the right time to do so.

MRR: The record feels complete from start to finish, as if it is one piece. Was it written with this in mind or did things start coming together after some of the songs were written?

Milosz: That was the plan. We wanted to make a complete record with all the songs working with each other. I don't like when bands just squeeze a bunch of songs together and put out a record. It may work for faster hardcore bands with short songs, but not for us.

MRR: There are lots of longer, quiet parts with keyboards and strings on the LP. Do you manage to incorporate this into the live set as well, and if so, do you find it challenging to hold the crowd's interest during a two-to-three minute quiet interlude?

Milosz: We played a lot of concerts as a four-piece band without keyboards and people were asking, where are the keys? We just couldn't find anyone to do it. Finally, we found someone and now we play with keyboards. I think it sounds complete now. As far holding the crowd's interest, I don't know, people seem to enjoy it.

Max: There have definitely been moments where I can sense we're boring people a bit, but it's to be expected I suppose. It doesn't really bother us though, because those people usually walk out of the room during the first song and the people who appreciate what we have to offer stay until the set is finished. To be honest, I've been pretty surprised at the response from the general punk scene. More often than not, my cynical expectations have been proven wrong with this one.

MRR: There seems to be a pretty pervasive trend in punk/metal/crust these days towards rougher, rawer music, and then comes this LP with huge production and painstakingly crafted songs. It is calculated and deliberate and seems to fly right in the face of what lots of new bands are doing these days. Was this a conscious move on your part?

Max: Well, it was conscious in the sense that we've always aimed for something big, but it's certainly is not a backlash or reaction to those styles in any way. We just aren't into that kind of music. The "raw" bands purposely aim for a noisy, primitive sound, and at this point, with the prevalence of digital recording, you have to deliberately try to sound low-fi. Maybe the bigger production on our albums is unappealing for people of that scene, but what we are doing is not so different, it's just going in the opposite direction. I guess it's all about preference. We believe in what we are doing, we are happy with what we are doing and this is all that really matters.

MRR: When I think of Boston currently, I think of young fast hardcore. What was the reaction when Morne started playing live in the area?

Max: And to most those kids we're old slow metal (ha!). As for the reaction in Boston, I don't think too many people are interested in what we do. We have actually only played Boston a handful of times, maybe four shows in two years. This is mostly due to the fact that we don't want to over saturate anyone with our presence. Too many local bands wear out their welcome in their hometown just by playing too much. It just seems sort of self-indulgent and eventually over time no one cares anymore, so what's the point?

MRR: You toured Europe in 2009. There have been countless discussions about the differences between touring Europe and the US, but briefly, how were you received there compared to shows in the Northeast US?

Milosz: I think our tour in Europe went pretty well. Of course there were good and bad shows, but in general, the reaction was pretty good. A lot of people enjoyed our music.

Max: I feel like we went to Europe with more to offer than our brief US tour experience, so in the end it was more successful for us. It was my first time there with a band and I was amazed at many aspects of the punk community. The organization of the underground scene and the venues they operate were way beyond my imagination. The hospitality and treatment we received was also quite eye-opening for me.

MRR: Milosz, you are from Poland and spent years as a member of Filth of Mankind. Did your time in that band help Morne on the European tour? And how was it playing in Europe (and Poland) again after so many years living in the US?

Milosz: I almost didn't have to use any of my contacts, except maybe for gigs in Poland. I asked my buddy Pawel, who I played with in Filth of Mankind, to help with that, but everything else was booked by Timo from Alerta Antifacista. I have to say it was good to be back. I met a lot of old friends and made new ones. It was awesome. I had a chance to play at Kopi in Berlin again, which is always a good time. Who knows if that place will be still there when we will go back?

MRR: Let's hope that Kopi is there for many years to come! I have found that generally speaking, European punks are not as interested in the sound of live bands. Bands who I would hear on vinyl sounding like a massive wall of sound would then show up to a gig and plug into a small guitar half stack and a bass 4x10 and then crowds would ridicule US bands for wanting "more amps" and "more volume." I can't tell you how many times people asked what we were trying to overcompensate for with our big amplifiers. Did you encounter any of this on your tour? I can easily imagine the sound of your LP transferred to the live setting, but I can just as easily imagine European punks being rather turned off by such volume.

Max: I think people were pleased with the volume… everyone except for the sound guys. We got asked to turn down at a lot of the shows and unfortunately, due to Erik's louder-than-normal drumming, this wasn't really an option.

Milosz: In many cases it may be a money situation. I guess in Eastern European countries it's still a problem, but I have to say, at the shows we play, bands usually have pretty big gear. Also, here in the US, DIY shows pretty much always have not-so-good PA systems, so having big amps may make more sense. But if you look at some squats and other venues in Europe, there is always or most of the time, a pretty good sound system. Mostly we use full stacks, but when there is a good sound system we break it to half stacks. Just to have less to carry (haha).

MRR: Because of your live sound needs, did you find it more difficult to play in some of the punker venues in Europe? And what about the US? I cannot imagine Morne loading into a basement in Tennessee with a 50 watt PA and one microphone. Does your live setup dictate where you can or cannot book gigs, and have you experienced any backlash from punks because of this?

Milosz: The European tour we did as a four piece and I have to say that we didn't have too many problems, but now when we have live keyboards, we need a good PA. There is no way around it. We just want to sound as good as we can and in our case, a 50 watt PA may be a no go for us. I guess some bands may get away with it, but as much as we would try to make it work, it could sound pretty bad. Having keyboards may be pain in the ass, but it sounds pretty cool (haha).

MRR: While booking shows in the US, do you find this limitation to be a bit of a problem? Lots of punk "venues" in the states (I'm thinking houses/basements/rented halls here) have pretty serious PA limitations, so do you find yourselves having to go with more club-style gigs (and perhaps more club-style promoters as well) instead of the underground venues? And when you're playing at the club with the nice PA instead of the basement with a 50 watt bass amp for three singers and keyboards, do the punks give you shit (if they haven't yet, then I'm sure they will!). And more importantly, do you care if the punks give you shit?

Max: We tried to make it pretty clear to all the promoters what we needed in order to perform and it didn't seem to be much of an issue. I think our needs are relatively reasonable. All the promoters are tied in with the underground scene in some way, so I have faith that their discretion will reflect that in what venues they choose. Still I'm just hoping that anyone who appreciates the band will come and support us, despite whatever places we may end up playing in.

Milosz: We just wanna sound good, that's all, but I don't think we necessarily have to go through bigger promoters to achieve that. So far we were lucky to work with people who got their shit together and helped us in a really awesome way. I'm sure that there will be people saying some shit but, seriously, I've been attached to this scene for so many years and I have to say I don't give a fuck. I walk my own path and we as a band do what we do and if someone doesn't agree with it, then what can I do? I'm not gonna try to make everyone happy, it's just impossible.

MRR: As far as musical influences, I think that NEUROSIS and AMEBIX are pretty obvious (in fact, I have waited for ten years for NEUROSIS to make something that feels like "Untold Wait"). What are other musical sources of inspiration?

Milosz: I listen to a lot of Pink Floyd, New Model Army, Killing Joke, Joy Division. The list is pretty long.

Max: Aside from the bands you mentioned, my all-time list of influences is simple: Black Sabbath, Nirvana, Motorhead, and Metallica (Cliff era, obviously).

MRR: While it's relatively easy to identify the musical direction a band is coming from, with Morne it's more than just a bunch of songs. The records really portray emotions. Are these feelings that are more internal, or do you draw from the world around you and create the music as a reaction?

Milosz: I observe life around me, and my own life, and try to express my thoughts and emotions by writing music. Most of the time it just comes to me. I don't sit with my guitar in my hands for five hours and try to write a riff. It's all spontaneous. It's sad because reality is sad. I spend a little more time on writing lyrics. It's a little bit harder to put words together so they tell a story within a few sentences. Over all, writing music or lyrics comes from my everyday life. They are personal and not straight forward. Maybe people who read my lyrics can find in them something for themselves, their own experiences...

MRR: Do I understand then that the music and lyrics come from Milosz? Or is everything a more collaborative process?

Milosz: So far I wrote most of our music and lyrics. It's just because I had most of the songs written before everyone else joined the band. Now we are trying work together.

Max: I feel the songs have all naturally evolved and taken their current form through everyone's contribution. "To Rust" was the first full song we composed together and still view that as one of our strongest. Still, I think when writing songs as a band, it's never a good thing to have too many cooks in the kitchen. There always has to be some consistency in style and quality.

Milosz: I think my writing put us on some kind of path and like Max said, we wanna keep it consistent. I'm sure we will be developing some different ideas as we write together, but we don't wanna let it drift away too much from what we are doing now.

MRR: After the Texas to Seattle tour in summer of 2010, what are the plans for Morne? After such a long wait between the demos and "Untold Wait," can we expect a lull before the next record?

Max: We aren't really thinking too far beyond the tour for the moment. However, we've finally begun working on new material and we're hoping to have a couple fresh songs ready in time for tour. So, tentatively we're hoping to return to the studio in early 2011. Until then, touring and writing is all we have in our immediate future.

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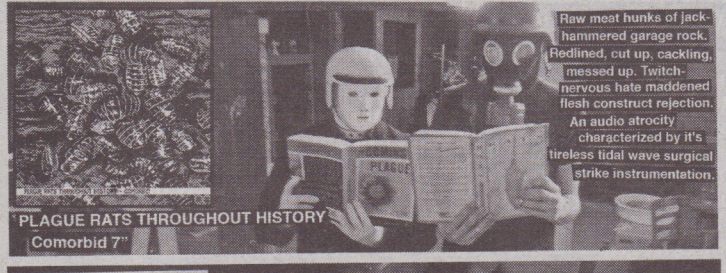

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BAD SPORTS

Interview By Max Dropout

MRR: Who are you?
Orville: I'm Orville

MRR: What do you do?
Orville: I play guitar, I sing, and I write a lot of the songs.

MRR: So would you say you're the principal songwriter for the band?
Orville: I'm also the *vice*-principal songwriter. No, but seriously, I wrote the first couple of songs, and then Daniel wrote some stuff, but now he writes for other bands so I don't have to worry about that as much. [*laughter*]

MRR: Daniel and Greg both live in Denton, but you moved down here to Austin pretty recently. How do you guys function in light of the distance?
Daniel: There's not much difference. Orville or I would always usually finish a song on our own and then bring it to practice, and say "hey, this is done, let's play it."

MRR: When do you practice now though? You guys have about a three-and-a-half-hour drive between you.
Orville and Daniel: Before a show. [*laughter*]
Greg: We have a lot of experience, playing together.
Daniel: Plus, Orville moved down here right after tour, so we don't have to practice the older material since we've played that stuff so much.
Greg: And if we go on tour, we'll rehearse before hand. Get a good two weeks in.

MRR: I've probably asked Daniel a dozen times over the last year about moving down here, and last night at the show I overheard him say something to the effect that there's less to distract you from getting shit done in Denton.

Daniel: Yeah, there's less stuff happening, and fewer people to hang out with. I have a lot more "me" time, I guess. If I were down here, I know I'd get distracted and just go to shows all the time.

MRR: A lot of bands become unproductive when they move here, I notice.
Daniel: I always assumed that, because I see bands from down here that have been playing the same songs for years.

MRR: So you're not some super disciplined guy?
Daniel: No, typically what I do is fueled out of boredom most of the time.

MRR: What's the D-bag ratio in Denton looking like these days?
Greg: I don't know? What's the Denton population? [*laughter*]
Daniel: Probably that, minus fifty.
Greg: The problem is that Denton has Jason Kelly [*laughter*]

MRR: Yeah, I guess that's kind of like when a fat guy takes up three rows of seats at a movie theater. So, how has Denton changed over the last few years? The last time I interviewed Daniel was for the Wax Museums two or so years ago. People were pretty excited about music down here at the time, but interest seems to have waned.

Daniel: Yeah, it's odd. It's kind of done a flip flop, where it used to be that we had to come to Austin to play to good crowds, now people in Denton seem to be caring more.

MRR: Is it just you guys, or bands in general?
Greg: All the bands are seeing better draws than before.
Daniel: We played a show on New Years Eve with Video, The Uptown Bums, and Bad Sports, and it was packed. People seem to give a shit. Whereas now, whenever we play Austin, we do well, but it's not the way it was two or three years ago, where there was tons of people all the time.
Greg: Denton has a lot of people who've become friends with each other now, so they support each other

Photo: Trent Ostvig

Photo: Kylela Valley

Orville: And everyone's tastes aren't straight down one genre. It's not, "crusties over here, garage rockers over there."

MRR: So are shows more diverse now?

Greg: Yeah. People who go to shows don't care what a band sounds like. They just want to see a band *play*. It's something to do.

MRR: Is Dallas still shitty?

Daniel: Dallas is still shitty, but we've played a couple of really good shows there. But who knows when the next really good show we play there will be. For the most part, the shows will probably continue to be terrible.

Orville: We got asked to play with King Khan and the Shrines in Dallas. Do you guys want to do that?

Daniel: When is that?

MRR: Who's doing it? Is it that Parade of Flesh guy?

Orville: Yeah.

Daniel: Fuuuuuuuck.

Orville: (*frustrated*) I wish more touring bands understood that if they went to Denton they'd have a way better time.

MRR: So you recommend Denton as an alternative to Dallas for bands?

Daniel: Oh, definitely.

MRR: It seems a lot of smaller towns are a better solution for touring bands. I think it's because small towns have a lot of bored kids who are starved for entertainment. I've heard surprising things about Lubbock and Marfa lately. I heard when the Oh Sees played Dallas that there were only about thirty people there though.

Daniel: And most of those people were from Denton. Every decent show in Dallas has about three people *from* Dallas there, and the rest carpool in from Denton. It's backwards.

Greg: That Parade of Flesh guy books a lot of cool bands, but there's no market for that stuff there.

MRR: I don't know how he does it, but he always manages to pay bands even when there's no crowd. This sounds horrible, but a few bands tell me about how they know the show will be awful, but it's a for-sure payday, and they don't mind ripping the guy off.

Greg: They should just book two shows then. Denton and then Dallas.

Orville; Plus, you save gas money that way.

Daniel: If you play Dallas you're probably going to stay with us anyway, because there's nowhere to stay in Dallas.

Greg: And then you get to stay up and watch sweet VHSs all night.

[*laughter*]

MRR: Let's talk about the *Denton Denton USA!* compilation that Play Pinball records just put out.

Greg: Well, we're on it about three or four times [*laughter*].

Orville: I'm on five tracks.

MRR: It's pretty sweet looking. It looks vaguely power pop. You guys are also on this comp that Matador records just put out, *Casual Victim Pile*, too. I thought it was kind of ironic that they misspelled the name of your track.

Greg: The Denton compilation is obviously a lot more personal to us. We know all these bands personally, and we know the guys who put it out.

MRR: So would you say it's a fare representation of the Denton scene leading up to the release?

Daniel: Yeah. There are a few bands they left off, but they did include some older bands like The Pumpers and The Influence.

Orville: I think a band like the Marked Men was left off because they're already established. These are all bands Chris is friends with, and he included anything he could get his hands on.

Daniel: There's no Silver Shampoo on there, though. We ran out of songs.

[*laughter*]

MRR: I think it's kind of cool and bizarre to see two compilations dedicated to the underground Texas scene on vinyl at such a late juncture. What do you guys think of the Matador comp?

Orville: I've listened to it. I think it's great. I don't understand why the No No No Hopes are on there.

Greg: I don't understand why the Persimmons are on there.

[*laughter*]

Orville: It's definitely a compliment that Gerard wanted to put us on there. It's validating. That photo shoot *The Statesman* did for the comp the other day was weird.

MRR: Greg and Daniel, you weren't here for it, but Orville showed up to "represent" Bad Sports. I had to open the club up early because they wanted to do some shot that included all the bands huddled together, yearbook photo style. One by one the bands were showing up, and it kind of felt like the beginning of *The Warriors*. I half expected Gerard to show up and go, "can yoooou dig iiiiiiiit?!"

[*laughter*]

Orville: Yeah, and I didn't want to take the picture by myself, so I got the Fleshlights to sit in with me, and I just covered up their faces. Jeremy Steen put his butt on my head. And Harlem were just being drunk as usual.

MRR: I didn't have anything to do with the comp. I book a lot of these bands, so I'm super proud of this comp and super happy that Gerard did this.

Orville: You're in the thank-you notes.

MRR: I did not know that. I just got it.

Orville: Not only do they have a "thank you" list, but there's a box below that which suggests other bands you should listen to that didn't make it onto the comp for whatever reason, like the Crack Pipes, and the Uptown Bums, which I thought was really cool.

Greg: It seems like I see Gerard at a lot of shows. He actually goes out and sees these bands, which is pretty cool.

MRR: A lot of people seem pretty apathetic toward what's going on in their town, none moreso than the bands. Writing a song is like a means to a drink ticket. Shows feel more like rent parties.

Daniel: Woah, maybe we should move to Austin!

MRR: So we're doing this for *MRR*, which is kind of hilarious to me. When I think of *MRR*, I don't think of dumb party rock. I think of forty-year-old dudes who pontificate the politics of DIY.

Daniel: Yeah, but then there's Mitch Cardwell, or Brace, or Icky. Those guys write stuff that's less political; especially Brace's columns, which are really funny to me. I do feel like we fit in somehow.

Greg: Most of the people I know who read that magazine are people in bands who want to see if their record got reviewed.

[*laughter*]

Orville: That's what I do.

Daniel: We were in *Thrasher* this month, which actually speaks more to me than *MRR*. No offense to *MRR*.

Orville: Skaters like us?

Daniel: Well, one skater likes us.

Orville: I can't wait to be in *Hit Parader*, with Korn. Actually, *MRR* would be more relevant to me if they put us on the cover, with a Bad Sports ad on every page. Just worship us basically.

MRR: You need a Bad Sports fanzine.

Orville: I need a houseboy.

Greg: That would be awesome. Why don't people do fanzines anymore?

MRR: Well, the internet is a double-edged sword.

It's a positive thing, but I think it's also made people lazier. No more of that pony express shit when it comes to waiting for zines, or records, or catalogs. I think people take the convenience for granted. If not for this Matador comp, for instance, I think most of these bands would still be waiting for someone to hold their hand. Has Denton gotten better about that? Here, it's gotten worse.

Daniel: As far as Denton is concerned,

there isn't a legitimate press that will cover what we do. There is no *Austin Chronicle*. So, it's passing out fliers and posting on Facebook or nothing.

MRR: I feel like a lot of bands here are waiting for it to come to them. They want someone to drop a bank account in their lap or something. I really miss the Wax Museums, who were always touring and putting out records. You guys were like the Woven Bones of your time.
[*laughter*]
Orville: Awe, shit.
Daniel: The drumming was the same.
[*laughter*]

MRR: This interview would make a great MadLib if we just put blank lines down in the place of the names we're shit-talking. But continuing forward, I think there's a long list of imaginative artists from desolate places. How much do you need boredom to do what you do?
Daniel: Well, obviously if you're in a place where there's something going on all the time; you're probably not going to be stuck in your house watching crappy movies in between writing songs to keep yourself occupied. Living in Denton is kind of like being in a vacuum. You can't get new records unless you order them. About the only thing you can find is seventies hard rock.
Orville: Just to clarify, I've had to force myself to be more productive since I moved down here. I still sit around by myself, bored as hell, wanting to shoot myself. It's lucky I don't have a gun.

MRR: Are you okay Orville?
[*laughter*]
Orville: I'm just kidding, really guys. I'm okay. But I still experience the same feelings down here that I did up there, even though it may be self imposed. I think the only way I'd stop being productive would be if I got a desk job.

MRR: I get what you're saying. I sequester myself from other people for the most part. I get a lot done because I'm fickle about whom I hang out with.
Orville: I do that too, because even my closest friends, I can't hang out with them all the time or I'd get tired of them.
Daniel: Should we talk about the album?

MRR: The album came out?
Daniel: Yeah, you didn't get one of those?

MRR: No. I don't pay attention to anything. Do people like it?
Greg: There hasn't been a really negative review, but there have been some not super positive reviews. The *Terminal Boredom* review was pretty stupid. It was like, "oh yeah, this band is from Denton, therefore they sound like the Marked Men, and this band, and that band."
Orville: There's a list of bands people throw into every review if you're from Denton. Just for you.
Daniel: I talked to Rich, and as the English say, I think he was "taking a piss." I think it's because I've put out a lot of records over the last three years.
Greg: Also, on the cover there's like three handsome dudes.
[laughter]

MRR: You guys recorded this in 2008?
Orville: Yeah, it was done a year before it was released; a year and three da

MRR: Why didn't take so long to get released?
Orville: Dragging our asses.
Greg: We dragged ass, and then Douchemaster had some other releases they had to put out before ours. Our timing just wasn't right.

MRR: Do you guys have a lot of new stuff written?
Daniel: A whole 'nother LP's worth.

MRR: When are you gonna record again?
Daniel: Actually, we're probably gonna talk about that on the ride home. I think we have fifteen or sixteen more songs and I think they're better than the first album's.
Orville: There are a couple songs I wish weren't on the record, while other ones were.

MRR: Kind of like *Appetite for Destruction*? I always thought "You Could Be Mine" should have been on there instead of "I Think About You."
Daniel: It's exactly like that.

MRR: Speaking of G'N'F'n'R', let's talk about *Shock 'Em Dead* for a moment.
[*laughter*]
Daniel: Oh man.
Greg: The first ten minutes were great. There were tons of sweet boobs.

MRR: It seems up until the last decade or so, comics, horror films, punk rock, and even pro wrestling were all lumped into an incestuous sort of cultural cesspool. It was all trash culture. It seems that's changed a bit. Daniel, you're a big Troma fan.
Daniel: Huge.

MRR: Do you think punk rock has become more isolated as it's become more established?
Daniel: As an entity? As a culture? Yeah. Everyone wants to be taken seriously now. Anything that's cheap and fun is like stooping. It's kind of refreshing when you see something that's Ramones-stupid. When you see a punk band that's sticking to three chords and having the time of their life, it's rare and great. It's kind of the same as when you go see some big budget movie that's grasping for wide approval and major awards. Who cares about all that crap? But then you watch a movie like *Shock 'Em Dead*, where there's no pretension. They know it's crap and they're having fun with it. *Shock 'Em Dead* has the three B's: boobs, blood, and bad words. That's all you need.

MRR: Do you feel comfortable lumping yourself in with a moniker like "trash culture?"
Daniel: Definitely! It's kind of like when it's Thursday night, I'll tell my friends, I'm going to go watch wrestling. They'll all frown and go, "why?" It's so much like when I'm talking to someone and they ask, "oh, you're in a band? What kind of music do you play?" And then I'll say, "I'm in a punk band." They ultimately always turn their nose up and say, "oh, whatever." I guess it's not real art to them.
Greg: Not sophisticated enough.

MRR: Good and simple is not the easiest thing to make work, though.
Daniel: Exactly.

MRR: So, you guys have nothing to prove, huh?
Daniel: Nope! [*laughter*]

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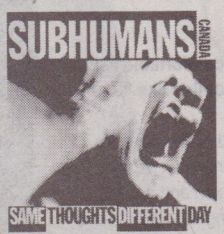

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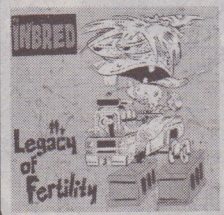

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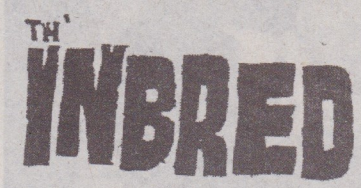
th' Inbred: Still Potent After All These Years

By Teresa Swanigan

What a fucking incredible name to give a punk band from Morgantown, West Virginia! And, much like the inbred in the Wrong Turn *movies, the music of th' Inbred just won't die. It's a damned good thing, too, because their unique approach to music and the messages their words convey stand the test of hardcore time. Robert Michael "Bobb" Cotter (aka Art Reco, singer/lyricist), Billy Atwell (aka Bif3, drummer/songwriter), Robert Bowers (aka, Robert, guitarist/sound businessman), and Duff McIntosh (aka Duff, bassist/songwriter) were not typical musicians. Alternative Tentacles is nurturing a new generation's opportunity to learn from the twisted truths told by a band that John Stabb of Government Issue referred to as "a jazzier but hardcore Dead Kennedys with Morgantown's version of Barry Henssler (The Necros) as their cocky front man" by having released a complete anthology of all things th' Inbred called* Legacy of Fertility. *It is available in both CD and limited edition colored vinyl forms at www.alternativetentacles.com*



Even now, when it seems that every faction and fashion in music is broken down into a million categories and subcategories, th' Inbred defy classification. Tim Yohannon described the band by writing, "Cross Capitol Punishment with Victims Family, Beefeater and Crucifucks and you'll see what this now defunct band was up to. Jazzy, snazzy, stop-on-a-dime delivery with matching intelligence." Jello Biafra described the band as, "A politically pointed punk act influenced by DKs, Minutemen, Crass, and Black Flag, their thrashy attack morphed into jazz-influenced hardcore by the end. Critical of straight edge youth crew mentality ("The Positive Song") and MTV, the topicality of this band is outlived by its sarcastic wit. Mocking social mores in tracks like "Scene Death", singer Art calls out "Nazi jocks with cash to spare" on 1985's Reproduction EP. Their musical ability set them apart from other negative vibe merchants…"

Unlike a lot of old-school punk, they knew how to play their instruments. They knew how to play them proficiently. Because of the intricacies of the music, lightning-fast time changes within songs, and songwriting formed and informed by many schools of musical thought splendidly blended together, some people have tried to label them "jazzcore" though they certainly weren't "jazzcore," whatever that may mean. They were a full-bodied experience that inspired audiences to move. Defying explanation should at least beg a desire to hear it for yourself, to read the lyrics, to ponder, "This was created in West Virginia?" That is the second lesson to take from th' Inbred's legacy: You can build a worthwhile scene anywhere if you find a place open to having a scene (all ages or a bar), gather together with others who want live music of all stripes (for a scene cannot thrive on one faction alone; no, it requires people of all ages, including us older experienced folk, and open to a wide variety of music), and work your butts off to make it so.

The scene th' Inbred helped build (along with many others) was in Morgantown, West Virginia. My first Inbred show just happened to be their first Inbred show (as most members played together in an earlier band called Dash and the Riprocks). They were all whip-smart and witty. Their flyers as Dash and the Riprocks were infamous throughout Morgantown (home of WVU, at that time a regular contender for Number One Party School) because they were ironic, sometimes shocking, often very funny, and freshly political without ever being preachy. In other words, the band had a reputation before they became th' Inbred. The evening of that first gig was an exciting one. Those who frequented the Underground Railroad knew that the guys had something very special planned to debut. We also knew that their "normal" was pretty fucking special, so anticipation was high to see just what their idea of special would be. They did not disappoint. Showtime. Everything goes dark except a large white piece of foam board atop the amps on the left side of the stage. Stravinsky's "The Rite of Spring" begins to play as a fight scene from *Destroy All Monsters* plays out on the screen. It was fun, arresting, and made everyone wonder WTF would follow this juxtaposition. Stravinsky ends. The stage lights go up. And, th' Inbred rip into the instrumental "Exercise #1" that bled seamlessly into "Fool's Paradise". With all of the timing changes and the complete energy of abandon pouring from the band in waves, it was impossible to not move with the music.

As the band became more well-known (opening for Raw Power on their first tour, three albums and an EP's worth of well-received original music, going from opening act for the likes of the Dead Kennedys, the Butthole Surfers, the Circle Jerks, The Offenders, Government Issue, The Dead Milkmen, Gangrene, DRI, Corrosion of Conformity, [really, a list too long to go into here] to becoming a headliner), they became bolder. As a matter of fact, they became so bold that some locals became scared when the band played around the time that some local church held a well-publicized book burning.

One of the burned books Bobb mentioned was *The Wizard of Oz* because it had witchcraft in it. Censorship was always an issue near and dear to Bobb's anarchy-rich heart. There used to be a huge piece of graffiti he did in Old Mountaineer Field (now long gone) that said, "The more we are governed, the less we are free –Art Reco."

Art/Bobb's response to the church book burning: 'Book burning is stupid…you wanna see something stupid?' and I held up a Bible and set it on fire. It was an orange one like from the hotel rooms because it was snagged while we were on tour. It was coated with some shit so it was really hard to light, and I'm like, 'Light you little fucker,' but finally it lit and there were people in the hardcore crowd even who were like, 'Are we going to get struck by lightning?' After that some people would cross the street when they saw me so they wouldn't have to encounter me. Some local musicians even refused to play the bar after that."

And, yet, there were still great moments of unity between different musical fan sets in the bar. There were punks, people into reggae, older hippies, the politically active, new wavers, a group that called themselves "hippie" and followed Andy Warhol's New York as their fashion guide to the background of music like The Cure or Echo and the Bunnymen. One night, Bobb was wearing an old t-shirt from Kiss's Rock-n-Roll All Over Tour (the one with the faces of the members in a wheel). As the band was playing, one of the quieter hippies named Speed just walked up to the front of the pit and opened his jacket to show that he, too, was wearing the same shirt. He ended up onstage arm-in-arm with Bobb for part of the show.

The Morgantown Scene was inclusive and protective. There was an old fella who had some sort of mental disability. He was infamous in Morgantown as Henry the Yup Yup Man because he went around saying, "Yup, yup," to himself quite a lot. The Yup Yup Man was the kind of fellow that most young folks would simply make fun of. Not the scene at the Underground Railroad, or the guys who owned the metal bar across the street. Henry loved live music. He didn't care what kind. One of the first really big shows I remember where a lot of punks from other bigger cities came to Morgantown for a show was the first Black Flag show at the Underground. The DC punks came en masse. The Pittsburgh punks were well represented. And, the crowd was a capacity crowd. Henry the Yup Yup Man always stood right against the stage. As it got close to time for the Black Flag to take the stage, we locals all started to worry about Henry because he had never experienced that tight of a crowd going mad all at once. Before some of the local guys could get to him, the band started and the frenzied thrashing began. Henry went down. They knocked the poor old fella right over, and the local guys held back the crowd to get The Yup Yup Man from the floor and carry him safely to the window beside the stage where he could watch without risk of injury.

It was such an inclusive scene because it was built to be that way. Marsha Ferber (who has been missing for many years now) ran the bar. She had lived the very history of rock and roll, from listening to Alan Fried (a radio deejay who coined the phrase rock and roll) as a child to living the '60s in all of its glory (even being engaged at one point to Abbie Hoffman's brother) to communal living in the '70s back-to-earth movement to being in Morgantown in the '80s fostering connections between music lovers, fostering unity so that we could have a crowd big enough to support a variety of bands, and fostering musicians and patrons alike to go for their dreams.

Jello Biafra was so impressed with the band's music, that he filed them away in his memory banks as a band he'd like to be able to sign. He said, "I really liked the band, liked the guys in the band and filed it in the back of my head that it would be great to put them out some day. Unfortunately, then as now, we never have as much money as I wish we did to release even my short list of favorites." I guess resurrecting the music of th' Inbred and introducing it to a newer, wider audience was on that short list of favorites because Alternative Tentacles has released them now.

Robert Bowers could not participate in the interview for Squirrel Sound (the sound business he and Chuck th' Sound God were running concurrently with th' Inbred and continues to thrive today) because "Squirrel Sound was and continues to be so consuming." For fans old and new, this is th' Inbred:

MRR: Why begin the first show with Godzilla to Stravinsky?

Bobb: Why? You mean why did we do it? Just something a little different to start out a show with... I love monster movies and I love Stravinsky. Kind of like at the beginning of *Fantasia*, except with Godzilla and Ghidrah.

Billy: That was Bobb's idea. There was a parallel with Bobb's fascination with classic horror films and hardcore. Godzilla was symbolic of th' Inbred mission, a mascot for whatever our version of the "revolution" was. The actual *Destroy All Monsters* film we used was one that I had; one my Dad had gotten me back when home movie projection was the cutting edge of technology. We found that "The Rite" strangely synched up with the footage on the reel we had.

MRR: What bands were you first really excited to be able to open for at URR?

Bobb: Riistetyt and Raw Power was the first big hardcore show there. So we were very excited to be opening for two international acts that we had only experienced on record. It was partly disappointing, though, because Riistetyt had been this brutal thrash band in Finland, but by the time they made it over here, they had become Hanoi Rocks clones and changed their name to the Holy Dolls with a completely different attitude. But that was more than made up for by Raw Power, who were just like standing next to a jet engine. Love those guys—always will. We wound up doing our first tour with them.

Billy: For me it was 7 Seconds back in the Dash days because they were *7 Seconds*. It was really cool to be able to *actually play with* a band I was listening to on a regular basis. I had just gotten *The Crew* and loved the energy/ melodicism of it. Of course it wasn't long after that "The Positive Song" was written and the rest is history. Go!

MRR: What show with a big headliner do you think was best at the URR?

Bobb: The best show was the DKs show, no doubt, the biggest hardcore show ever in Morgantown.

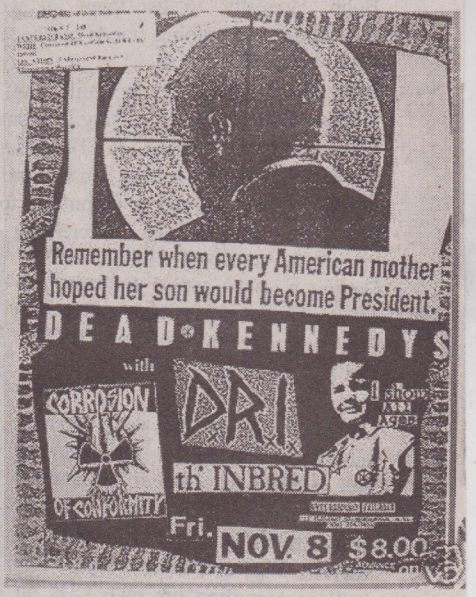
Billy: I remember the Circle Jerks show being pretty awesome because it was the first time we played King Crimson's "Red" which was sort of like honoring a scene request. People lost it. Playing with the Dead Kennedy's, COC, and the Offenders...all were great shows.

Duff: Well there were a bunch: COC, DKs, Adrenaline O.D., Butthole Surfers, Circle Jerks, etc.

MRR: Same turf and what show was a disappointment?

Bobb: Gang Green. I don't even have to think about that one. It wasn't so much that, like Riistetyt, they were no longer the brutal thrash band they had once been, but they were just assholes to everybody, including the audience. I called 'em out in the middle of their set for it. Their first words upon arriving in town were "Where's the coke?"

Billy: I can say this: one can get comfortable in a room with good acoustics and a regular venue with a great sound system like Squirrel Sound. Touring was a discovery of many things. Bad PA's. Poor acoustics. Front lighting. I can say: Austin, TX, 1985, Opening for Scratch Acid. The Brewery, Raleigh, NC, didn't play with COC but they were there. Austin, TX, 1985, opening for Cargo Cult in the parking lot of some record store for their record release party. Playing the Rock Against Racism event at the foot of the Washington Monument. I am not a fan of playing outdoors. The acoustics suck and the sound disappears. The wind blows your cymbals around. I don't like to eat outside either.



MRR: Including yourself, who were the main people who made flyers for shows?

Bobb: I did the greatest majority of them; Paul Riggie did a bunch, Paul Taylor did a bunch, Jim Hayes did some, and sometimes somebody would make a flyer for a show if they were just really into the band that was coming or whatever.

Billy: I *never* made an Inbred flyer. Bobb made the main ones. Other bands on the bill would make some, too. I know Duff made Underground Railroad/Dry House flyers but for the most part Bobb did the flyers.

MRR: There are a bunch of flyers on your MySpace, but I remember a flyer that isn't there that was made right after David Kennedy overdosed and died. Do tell.

Bobb: The "Daddy, when I grow up, I want to be just like you and Uncle Jack" flyer was a picture of Bobby Kennedy leaning over to whisper something in JFK's ear, so that phrase was prefaced with "And then David said..."

Billy: I don't remember this but would *love* to see it!

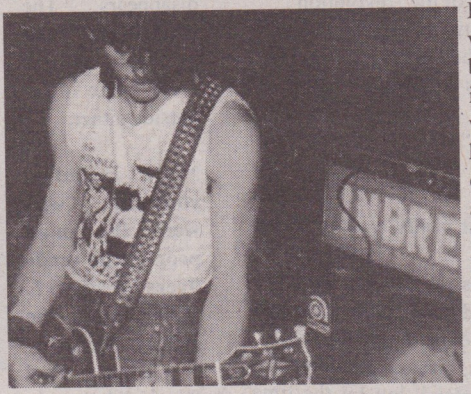
MRR: I remember a story about you guys showing up to a show at one of the more famous punk clubs and Bobb had a little tête-à-tête with a guy over stereotyping.

Bobb: We got to the club and the guy who came out to "greet" us asked us where we were from, and I told him West Virginia. His eyes immediately shifted downwards. I said, yeah, West Virginia, asshole, and if you look at my feet to see if I'm wearing shoes again, I'm gonna knock yer ass back into the club. But everybody got over it real quick.

MRR: What's your favorite memory of the first year playing live as th' Inbred?

Bobb: Honestly, to list them all would take three issues. Everything and nothing stands out because it was such a heady environment as a whole.

Billy: I don't think it can be singled out. There were a lot of great things. Writing and rehearsing. Feeling it come together. The first show. Playing with COC, The Offenders. Touring with Raw Power. Actually just getting in a van and going for it. Seeing kids in high schools around town putting together bands and doing their own thing. Making and creating a record ourselves (Reproduction). Getting a scene report published in *MRR*. The process of writing and preparing to record "A Family Affair". But that's year two. Enough.



Following the break-up of th' Inbred, Bobb began pursuing art and graphics as a career. He studied under some wonderful graphic artists. Billy Atwell went on to tour with the Rhythm Pigs and False Prophets, as well as recording his own CDs on which he plays all of the instruments. Duff McIntosh stayed in Morgantown and continued playing music and being politically active. Robert Bowers went on to tour with Government Issue doing sound. Of that, John Stabb said, "Apart from the group itself, Robert endured two months of touring with G.I. as our #1 Tour Demon Roadie / Soundman / Driver / Therapist / Band Fight Referee. And he was just a top-notch fellow who was fun to hang around and shoot the shit with. Having to deal with National Front Nazis, full-scale riots and stolen equipment at some of our less than pleasant gigs was a lot to take but Robert stuck it out with a band that had some of the worst luck in Punk Rock. G.I. owes him a monumental debt of gratitude."

Today, Robert Michael "Bobb" Cotter (Art Reco) is a successful author of three books. Billy Atwell (Bif3) is a proficient musician with a wide array of experience from having done pieces for Lincoln Center to scoring experimental films and putting his own CDs out. Duff McIntosh (Duff) is still active in punk music, most recently having moved from the Pacific Northwest to the New York City area. And, Robert Bowers (Robert) is a very successful businessman who co-owns Squirrel Sound, which is still based in Morgantown, West Virginia, and has done sound for some of the biggest names you could care to dream. I can't brag those names for him because Robert is and always was a private person.

But, the guys in the band did keep ties with a lot of their fellow punk musicians of the day. Jack Steeples, from Adrenaline OD, remembered spending the night in the guest room at Robert Bowers house once when Robert's wife and son were away. "I remember that all of the bedding was white. I think the blanket was like a white satin frilly type thing. I got up in the middle of the night, still a bit drunk, and was looking for the bathroom. It was dark and I wound up falling down the stairs. I was knocked unconscious for a short time. I came to with Paul (AOD) asking if I was okay and then went back to bed. I realized in the morning that the walls in the stairway had a stucco finish and cut up my arms quite a bit. Nothing serious but enough to make me bleed. Enough to make me bleed all over the nice white frilly bedding. I felt bad about it but that's what you get when you let an asshole like me stay at your house…th' Inbred are great guys and a great band! We always had fun whenever we did a show with them." From there on, Billy Atwell referred to the walls at Robert's house as the Stucco Death Walls, as did others. Don't know about you, but for me that Stucco Death Walls thing brings to mind Sheena Easton's "Sugar Walls" in an entirely unpleasant way. Then again, it's not like there's a pleasant way to think of a Sheena Easton song, now is there?

th' Inbred were revolutionary in their approach to music and in their lyrics. Nothing would be a more fitting legacy beyond the music than for their story to inspire musical revolutions in smaller towns where people want live music and just didn't know how to go about creating the foundation for a musical ladder on which the willing and the able may climb to whatever heights for which they're willing to strive. They came from West Virginia. They stayed in West Virginia. They toured and came home to West Virginia each time. West Virginia. Not really the first state that would pop to mind as a springboard for a musical legacy in hardcore. But, where th' Inbred's career is concerned, West Virginia, it could be said, is like the New York song Fame with a twist: If it can happen there, it can happen anywhere. The same could be said of your town, if you're willing to put the work into it and enlist kindred spirits who may not be into exactly the same kind of music as you, but are in the same boat.

Start your own local music revolution.

BOOKS

Noise & Capitalism

Noise & Capitalism
Edited by Mattin and Anthony Iles
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Noise & Capitalism is a recent collection of writings attempting to provide some theoretical grounding for the politically subversive potential of noise music; reading it is, as is the case with most collisions of alternative culture and academia, an infuriating experience.

Of course, it's an anthology, and as such sustains at least a modicum of disagreement among its contributors' work. In particular, the essays by Ray Brassier and Nina Power stand out for their willingness to, respectively, admit that "'noise' is neither more nor less inherently subversive than other commodifiable musical genre" and critique the persistent masculinism of most noise subcultures. But the vast majority of the texts reveal a constellation of misguided operating principles, which mostly come down to equivocation and predictable revolutionary metaphysics.

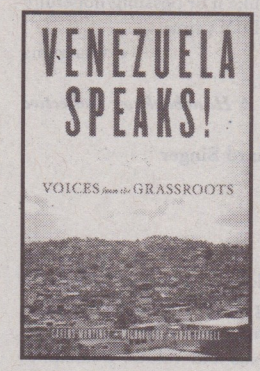
By "metaphysic," I mean the assertion that noise is somehow, by its very definition and operation, antagonistic to the fundamental commitments of capitalism. This is chalked up to various and sundry of the genre's practices, from its performance of alienation and disdain for an aesthetics of pleasure to its eschewing of conventional structures of musicality in its improvised form. But the question remains: how, exactly, is "noise", different from other transgressive, alternatively produced music genres? Many of the claims made about the alleged specificity of "noise" could be repeated almost verbatim to describe punk, hip-hop, metal, and other subcultures, leaving the text, which relies so heavily for its alleged subversive potential on an essential "noise"-ness, with no way of accounting for the singularity of "noise" itself.

The fundamental emptiness at the heart of the book's organizing concept–which, again, permeates most but not all of the texts–produces interesting conflations. That is, the book has "noise" in the title, but it's never quite clear what work the editors or contributors see this term as doing. The most interesting of these conflations is that between noise and improvisation. It is under no circumstances given that we should be reading these developments together, and the role that musical structure might play in arguing for this division is woefully underthought; to use just two examples from the book itself, what does the rigid mathematicism of the Locust's noise have to do with the relative structurelessness of free improvisation? That is, I understand that both noise and improvisation transgress certain aesthetic conventions near and dear to capitalism—noise self-consciously performs ugliness, while improvised music complicates notions of musical form—but what justifies their affinity, and at the expense of other kinds of musical production that do roughly the same thing but in different ways?

If there is a common thread–and, again, I'm reaching here; there's no explicit articulation of this point in any of the texts–that unites improvisation and noise in opposition to other genres, it is that they both represent ostensibly critical or alternative subcultural music formations whose very structuring aesthetics rely explicitly upon "expert" or "privileged" languages in order to participate: computer science and audio engineering in the latter case, and the whirling bullshit of complexity that is music theory in the former. This strikes me, no matter how many good-intentioned proclamations the authors can make in favor of participatory culture, as a particularly suspect variety of vanguardism—a lurking invitation, to borrow a phrase from Dr. Frank, to leave the thinking to the smart people. There are larger questions here, ones that would swiftly carry me from book review to indulgent manifesto; the primary thrust of my critique remains that the text doesn't work on its own terms. However, if I'm allowed a parting thought: every day I thank Darby for punk rock's deskilling of musical practice–how many of us could even participate if that wasn't the case?–but it might be time to articulate that commitment in explicitly populist terms, precisely so we don't end up looking like this.

*Note: It is worth remarking that, despite its problematic content, the production of the volume itself does, in a sense, put its money where its mouth is: the full text is available for free download at http://www.arteleku.net/audiolab/noise_capitalism.pdf, while the physical book is available only through exchange and trade: send the publisher some of your work (art, music, writing) and they'll ship you a copy. Your move, punx.

–Maxwell Tremblay



Venezuela Speaks!: Voices From the Grassroots
Carlos Martinez, Michael Fox and Jojo Farrell
343 pages • $22.95
PM Press
PO Box 23912
Oakland, CA 94623

This book is a collection of interviews here from October 2007 to November 2009 of Venezuelan grassroots activists with the explicit purpose of putting the election and policies of Hugo Chavez into a "broader context of the development of social movements in Venezuela." Especially since "the international media was increasingly losing its touch on Venezuelan reality," focusing instead on the single political leader rather than those in the daily trenches.

The bottom-up activists profiled here are from a broad spectrum of Venezuela's social movements. Since Chavez took power in 1999 the country has moved explicitly towards a "Bolivarian Revolution" of restructuring their society; away from outside oil interests and into a participatory democracy. That struggle alone is interesting historical reading, but what we get here is a step further. Ten years into this revolution, how are things going? Many of those interviewed are in a duel fight of "defending their government against the opposition while simultaneously defending it." The Constitution did get re-written but how is it going to be implemented and enforced when landowners are still murdering campesinos?

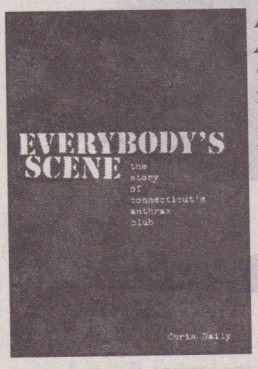
Interviews still make such an accessible way to wrestle with and understand history. That said, *Venezuela Speaks!* is also informative from the very introduction. The 1973 abandonment of fixed exchange rates giving birth to neoliberalism? I didn't know that. Readers with no background in Venezuela's history and politics can follow the issues based solely on the text.

After two concise, clear intros, the interviews are arranged into broad categories: Land and Housing Reform, Women and Sexual Diversity Movements; Workers and Labor, Community Media, Arts and Culture; Indigenous and Afro-Venezuelan Movements, The Student Movement, and Community Organizing. The interviews still retain the subject's voice rather than making a flattened chorus as in Studs Terkel's *Working*. The intros to each profile could've been fleshed-out a bit, but that's just this reviewer's taste.

Will the topics and stories here resonate in other communities? Is that too much to ask of a history paperpack? Certainly the firsthand examples here cast a shadow on the current focus on the American president. Yanahir Reyes of the feminist radio program *Millenium Women's Word* is especially cogent when speaking of her community work, and a common thread to the narratives is an acknowledgment of what's working and functional and what needs further addressing. At the risk of using a clichéd word, I'll go ahead and call the book crucial.

Finally, other publishers please take note on their style. A solid font is used, contrasted with a sensible paper stock with a map in front, abbreviations explained in the back, excellent supplemental photos, clearly organized chapters, and a cover that actually makes you want to pick up the book. For the cover, I'll thank John Yates, while Josh MacPhee gets kudos for the layout. Thanks.

—Travis Fristoe



Everybody's Scene: The Story of Connecticut's Anthrax Club
Chris Daily
208 pages • $18
Butter Goose Press
www.anthraxclubbook.com

Spilling with photos, flyers, recollections, and a chronological storyline, this is essentially a love letter to back in the day.

The Anthrax was a venue/art space in Stamford, Connecticut that ran from 1982-1990. Like so many punk clubs before and after it the space served as a community hub for the local misfits and malcontents. Kids showed up no matter what sort of event was going on simply because it was the only place to go. Before long a scene emerged and during the club's life just about any local and touring US band that you can think of from that era played there. Sadly, after two location changes, the neighbors finally won the age-old battle of community space vs. community tranquility.

The legacy left behind was huge and well-documented, both in story and in photo. Even if you never made it to the Anthrax this large and densely-photo-packed book will either remind you of some place just like it or possibly/hopefully inspire you to participate and contribute to your own DIY venue.

—Craigums

Come Hell or High Water: A Handbook on Collective Process Gone Awry
Delfina Vannucci and Richard Singer
128 pages • $10
AK Press
www.akpress.org

As anybody who has worked in a collective knows, people don't always get along easily. The decision making process can be aggravating even when, ostensibly, everybody has the same goals and values. Sometimes this arguing leads to accusations of Cointel spies (or maybe that was just my group of wingnuts' special fear), infighting can begin, people get frustrated, people get burnt out, people quit.

Come Hell or High Water addresses a lot of the behaviors that cause fragmenting in collectives. Focusing on different tactics that can, and are, used as power plays by some people, the authors examine the problems behind things like out and out banning without due process, clique building, creating pariahs in the group, bullying and martyrdom, as well as a ton of other manipulative tactics. Since this book focuses on what goes wrong, the first part is just examples of bad behavior and how to recognize it. The latter part of the book gives pointers on how to actually make a collective run (fairly) smoothly. At first I really wished that the problems were followed immediately by solutions, I think this format actually works well since it allows the reader to examine all these crazy behaviors that people may be exhibiting in their own collective, and then gives a broad solution that will help alleviate all the problems. (Key points made in the solution section—treat all concerns raised as legit even if they're raised by somebody you don't like, you can seek outside mediation, you don't always have to kick people out to solve problems, even though you're an anarcho-collective, you still need guidelines so everybody can be treated fairly.)

I've been looking for a book like this for the past ten years. Funny and informative, Vannucci and Singer have clearly put a lot of work into examining these issues and coming up with useful solutions. Totally useful for anybody in or interested in collectives. Plus, it has cute little comics interspersed throughout the chapters.

—Thera Webb

When Energy Meets Attitude, We Call It Punk
Christoph Lampert
178 pages • 29.80 €
OX fanzine Publication
www.ox-fanzine.de

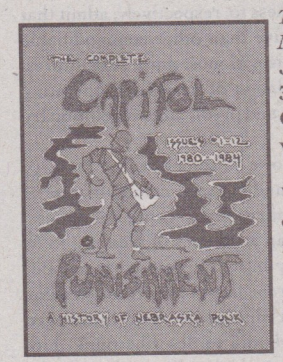
This book compiles a series of photographs taken at multiple German shows from 1989 to 2008. The overall look of the book is that of a high school yearbook. Which is fine if I wasn't a high school yearbook teacher tired of the format. Along with the photos is some text. The bands were asked to reflect back as far as 20 years to see how they felt about a particular gig or tour. There are some interesting stories and memories provided but some of it is not all that interesting. Overall, however, I can't help but praise the effort that has gone into doing a project like this.

Now I move onto the most important element of the book, the photographs. There is a divide between black and white and color prints. I can only conclude that this divide is present to distinguish two eras one "Old School" vs. "A Newer School?" as well as a divide between two photographic mediums: film versus digital. I have my biases on this matter, as do many old photographers; we lean towards the more antiquated process. That said I find that there has been a shift that is evident in these photos that is unrelated to the format wars. I like the earlier photos because there is a very DIY presence in all of them.

The book opener is a shot of Bad Religion that provides the viewer with so much information. The photo reveals a time, a moment and an energy that seems to be missing in most of the color work. I do have a preference for the older bands and am not too big of a fan of the later acts Lampert chose to photograph. What is also evident is that the older works contain such amazing details. The backgrounds are covered in flyers, posters and other ephemera that scream DIY squat punk! I love those details and they add so much to the overall feel of the photographs. Taking a look at the more recent work I notice a void of such crucial elements and the backdrop has shifted to a very pro-club atmosphere that looks boring.

I hope that Lampert has not given up on the still existing uber-underground stuff. We all know it's visually stunning and much more interesting than plain old rock and roll. Lastly, I would like to say once again that it is wonderful to see projects such as this one come to light. I applaud the nerve to publish one's body of work and expose it in such a format. Good job.

—Martin Sorrondeguy



The Complete Capitol Punishment: A History of Nebraska Punk
Jim Jones, ed.
308 pages • $24.95
CP Publishing
www.capitolpunishmentzine.com

Wow! First of all, I'm sort of surprised that this exists—it's a reprint of the complete run of the forgotten punk zine *Capitol Punishment* from Lincoln, Nebraska, that existed from 1980-1984. I'll admit my first thought was, "Will anymore care?"

Well, anyone besides me... I'd never heard of *Capitol Punishment*, but I'm always excited to discover that some artifact of early punk has been preserved and made available to the masses. OK, so this isn't the most beautiful project ever. It looks like the issues were just scanned and printed in the center of the pages (so there's a huge white border around most everything) without too much attempt to darken the sometimes-grey text. This is not to imply that anything is illegible—it's not—but just that it looks kinda budget and slapped together. I suppose you could argue that it's keeping in the original spirit of the zine? The other gripe I'd make is that the printing is half-toned and sometimes low-resolution. I'm not sure exactly why they did that, but overall it's not a big deal. For the photos, we're talking about reproducing a black and white xerox of a photo... I'm not expecting the best. I just wish the text were crisper and darker.

Anyway, what this book lacks in quality, it more than makes up for in quantity. At just over 300 pages, there's a solid month's worth of browsing here. Interviews with Hüsker Dü, TSOL, the Embarrassment, Black Flag and more, including a ton of local Nebraska groups—plus record reviews, show reports, editorials, fiction, art and photos (lots of 'em). The *Capitol Punishment* staff, though young, was intelligent and had interesting tastes in music. Their zine was around during the birth of hardcore, and while the editors appreciated the best of that stuff, they also show an affinity for underground pop, post-punk, and art bands that existed simultaneously to the American HC explosion. Apparently this was a bone of contention with some of the local punkers, as evidenced by a few angry letters in the later issues!

An added bonus to the reprinted issues is a brief history of Nebraska punk from the prospective of the zine editors and their friends, covering the years 1971-1984. I love reading about this kinda stuff—thinking about what important roles independent record stores, local radio stations, off-the-beaten-path venues and even common hang-out spaces had in fostering local scenes. Some curious trivia here as well: I learned alt-rocker Matthew Sweet, "grunge"-era Seattle photographer Alice "Malice" Wheeler and famous composer John Moran are all veterans of the Nebraska punk scene.

Assembling *The Complete Capitol Punishment* was clearly a labor of love for former editor Jim Jones. I'm glad he cared to document this little corner of punk history for the rest of us.

—Chris Hubbard

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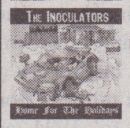

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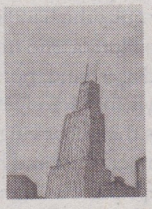

BURN COLLECTOR #14
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MOVIES

BRING ME THE HEAD OF GENE SISKEL

CAROLYN KEDDY

Like most punks, I think everything should be inexpensive. I am not going to buy a hundred-dollar pair of jeans when I can get a similar pair for ten dollars. That is why I am impressed with Plan-It-X selling CDs for five dollars post paid (in the US). How do they do it? The documentary **If It Ain't Cheap, It Ain't Punk** tells the story of the label.

Plan-It-X records started in 1994 as a way to release a record by the label's founders' band Operation: Cliff Clavin. After realizing that it was fairly easy to do, they started releasing records by more bands. Now the label is successful and well known. They still keep their CD prices at five dollars when they probably could be charging more. But that isn't their style.

Chris Johnston recalls when he started the label Plan-It-X people always assumed he was given money from his parents to run it. At the time, he was living in his van and running his label from there. He had no rent to pay so all that money could go back into the label. Once it started, the label began to pay for itself. He then released records by bands he was not in, such as The Bananas, Against Me, This Bike Is A Pipe Bomb and Japanther. The label developed into a scene that culminated in a weeklong fest in 2006.

Amusingly, **If It Ain't Cheap, It Ain't Punk** starts off with a young male stating, "There's really not much of a punk scene anyway." I don't know if he is involved with the Plan-It-X punks or what year he said that, but I always get a good laugh out of folks who make lame statements like that. It's just a lazy reaction. Just because he is not involved means it doesn't exist. I'd like to think that was included as a starting off point to prove that guy wrong. They do. (plan-it-x.org, $10 ppd)

All I remember about Stevie Stiletto was that they were (I thought) a heavy metal band that used to play at the Chatterbox when I first moved to San Francisco. I never saw them, but I also didn't like metal so why would I? I didn't know much else about them. After watching **My Life Is Great: The Stevie Stiletto Story,** I realize that when they lived in SF seemed to be the low point of the band. In fact, after lead singer Ray McKelvey suddenly quits the band in Arizona during one of their tours, then moves back to Florida, the story gets more interesting.

Stevie Stiletto was started as a band, not a person, but it seems to have evolved into the pseudonym for McKelvey. Started in the early '80s as Stevie and the Switchblades then changing their name to a possible nickname of the original drummer, the band has gone through endless line-up changes. McKelvey kept the band going for twenty-five years. They played a final show when McKelvey was diagnosed with days to live. That was about two years ago and as of this writing he is still alive.

My Life Is Great: The Stevie Stiletto Story is the type of documentary all musicians should aim for, completely honest in an almost embarrassing way. These guys will tell you any detail of their lives no matter how bad it makes them look. One guitarist, Tommy Berlin, makes a seemingly out the blue comment about how due to Stevie Stiletto he met the love of his life—heroin. Not that that is so shocking in the musical world, but the frankness with which he says it is. I am used to musicians making excuses or rewriting their history. These guys are not self-conscious at all which makes for an informative and entertaining documentary.

For all my preconceived notions about Stevie Stiletto's punkness or lack of it, the band did live up to all the notions of DIY. They released their own records, booked their own shows and tours, and even ran a club. I will also give them credit for actually acknowledging *MRR*. I see tons of these documentaries and rarely do any of them mention us. Stevie Stiletto sold their records by advertising them in these pages and even had their name appear on one cover.

The DVD **My Life Is Great: The Stevie Stiletto Story** also includes a twenty-two song CD covering all eras of the band just in case the two-hour documentary wasn't enough for you. (geneva13.com, $15 ppd.)

Open Your Mouth and Say...Mr. Chi Pig is the story of Ken Chinn aka Chi Pig lead singer of the band SNFU. The film covers Chinn from his adolescent years of seeing the Sex Pistols on TV news (the thing that changed his life) through the formation and subsequent break ups of SNFU to recently finally dealing with his mental illness. Chinn formed SNFU with twin brothers Marc and Brent Belke in 1981. The band toured endlessly and became more popular. Chinn claims an audience member head-butted him during a show and something cracked, leading to the start of his mental illness. Instead of dealing with it, Chinn started using drugs. As a result SNFU breaks up and reforms a few times losing members along the way.

Chinn is interviewed at various stages in life growing more haggard and distraught, as he gets older. Chinn discusses all aspects of his life: the band, his homosexuality, his addiction to crystal meth with candor. Although, at times it seems like maybe he doesn't recall what was going on, or is simply skipping over some of the more coarse facts. Also interviewed are a majority of present and former SNFU members as well as Jello Biafra, Shawn Stern, Chuck Dukowski, Joe "Shithead" Keithly and other musicians. The obvious omission is Marc Belke SNFU's songwriter who declined to be interviewed for the film.

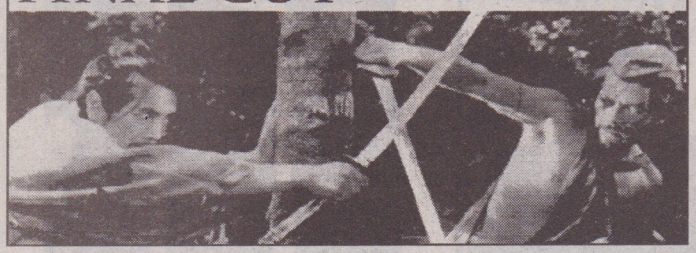
I wish **Open Your Mouth and Say...Mr. Chi Pig** had a bit more unabashed honesty. Not that I really know what the true story of SNFU is, perhaps this is it, but after watching the film it still feels like something is missing. (prairiecoastfilms.com)

Lost Kisses is a DVD collection of ten issues of the comic book of the same name. Basically each page of an issue is shot with a camera. The DVD shows each page for a few seconds so you can read along, as you would be doing with the comic book. It is awkward and I can't help but wonder why anyone would do this. The answer is fortunately included with the press kit. The comic book itself is as small as a matchbook. Making a comic book that small takes a long time, limiting how many you can make. Since the production

couldn't keep up with the demand, the pages where filmed allowing for easier and therefore more distribution. More people were now able to "read" the comic. That understandably makes sense.

The comic **Lost Kisses** is the various personal stories of a male stick figure character that is trying to figure out his life. Like most, he has had disappointments in love, friendships, career, family, etc. He questions himself and his decisions looking back at where he may have gone wrong, though not necessarily wanting to make any changes. Each episode is a short snippet of a thought in the mind of this character. The bottom of the frame tells the story. The top shows the stick figure making some sort of quip related to it. It is amusing and touching. (silbermedia.com) I am always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to Carolyn Keddy, PO Box 460402, San Francisco, CA 94146-0402. If your film is playing in the San Francisco Bay Area, let me know at carolyn@maximumrocknroll.com. I will go see it. www.carolynkeddy.com

FINAL CUT BY STEVEN SPINALI



MID-AIR CRASH

Japanese film director Hirokazu Koreeda founded his career first on a series of understated documentaries—work that also managed to attract the attention of international film programmers. His subsequent forays into feature filmmaking gave his growing legion of fans the same quiet, introspective narratives that they'd grown to love. Subtle, non-commercial—almost indie in flavor. Koreeda's films reached an early peak with 2004's **Nobody Knows;** based on real life events, it told the story of a small family adrift in life without a father (or much of a mother), while none of the neighborhood is clueless. Koreeda's latest film, **Air Doll,** uses the same naturalistic film style, but adapts it to a subject matter that can't help but be a little titillating.

After coming home one rainy night, a 40-ish laborer—even his name is scarcely mentioned—unloads the weight of his trivial concerns to his uncomplaining girlfriend. The man decides to dispense with the formalities. "What do you think…Skip the bath tonight?" His girlfriend is in no position to object, and she's already conveniently dressed in a mildly fetishistic maid costume—the cheap sort used for cos-play. Their sex isn't what one would call adventurous; that is, unless you count the fact that the man is doing it with a compliant vinyl, blow-up doll. Their little episode has a coda as the man fastidiously scrubs the doll's removable nether region. When the man wakes up to go to work the following day, he compliments the doll on how good she looks, and kisses her goodbye for the day. But, unbeknownst to the man, the doll seems quite capable of movement—possibly even thought.

As an experienced filmgoer, I tried to predict exactly where director Koreeda planned to go with this. A story about a man and his sex doll may seem initially promising, but your interest dries up quickly after the initial novelty. Aside from which, the unnamed man emerges as a fairly insignificant element of the plot.

But while the man sets off for work, it seems that the doll has somehow acquired the capacity for independent action. The doll, who the man names Nozomi (played by Korean actress Doona Bae), dons her favorite costume—or at least, the one she can sensibly wear in public—and walks through the neighborhood, stopping by to make mud pies with neighborhood children and even visiting the corner DVD rental shop. Since Nozomi has never herself even seen a movie, her quick perusal of the adult section briefly sparks her curiosity.

Nozomi, for some reason, is fascinated by the concept of a video store; so much so, that she soon finds herself working there. (Writer-director Koreeda never goes into any detail on how she got the job, or what the basis of her work experience might be—though working at a DVD shop isn't the most mentally demanding job you could ask for. The plot shows little interest in describing the expository information that would otherwise make sense of the story). Soon, Nozomi finds herself thrust into workaday Japan, and she's polite and quiet enough that people tend to take for granted that she always seems to wear a maid costume, and has telltale seams in her vinyl bodice.

By this point in the movie, I'm befuddled. Where is this thing going? Is this some kind of fantasy in which a female Pinocchio somehow becomes human? Is it a way to humanize the plight of semi—realistic sex dolls? Is this actually going to turn into a romance? Are we supposed to laugh, or take this seriously?

Screenplay writer/director Koreeda has always fancied speculative fiction as an entrée into his special variant of filmmaking. It's as if he relies on his own unique metaphors to advance his themes, usually addressing existential truths. Nor are his films necessarily logical; but they're always distinctive and, if the concept is right, also rather compelling. This film is based on a manga by Yoshiie Goda, also named *Air Doll*; however, the film's main faults may be related to (director) Koreeda's difficulties in dramatizing this material.

That's fine when he tells a story like **Nobody Knows**, where the situation is realistic and accessible; there's no question that the events on screen could actually happen. But the more fanciful his concepts, the more preposterous they become. Individual scenes give the sense of profundity, but seem exactly the opposite the more you think about them.

"Life contains its own absence," Nozomi muses one afternoon, "which only an Other can fulfill." For an inflatable vinyl doll, she apparently has experienced her own variety of emptiness—at least the kind of emptiness a doll can identify with. Koreeda loves playing around with concepts, as if these hypothetical ideas are somehow meaningful. But as **Air Doll** proceeds, you get the sense that it may very well be considerably less than the sum of its parts.

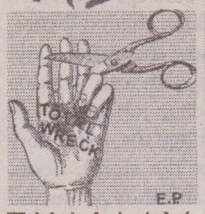
The film's simple uncomplicated pacing and imagery doesn't make many intellectual demands on the viewer. In fact, you'll find a number of beautifully rendered sequences in **Air Doll**.

I can only presume that the trajectory of the plot is meant to suggest what some have called "the lightness of being." An inflatable doll does not necessarily have much of an inner life, but Nozomi understands the same emptiness experienced by ordinary human beings—perhaps more so. I'd just finished seeing an episode of BBC's "Japanorama" at around the same time as I caught **Air Doll**. Some people apparently collect vinyl dolls—but not for sex (or so they claim)—all the while complaining how their preferred dolls have an inevitable tendency to wear out in all the wrong places. But Koreeda doesn't even have the good sense to detail the ironic, even comic details of life for a vinyl sex doll; he's only interested in pseudo-insights.

Doona Bae is in nearly every scene, but her acting is best when we catch the human details of Nozomi's personality. She's appeared in small films like the engaging **Take Care of My Cat**, as well as the relative (for South Korea) blockbuster, **The Host**. Koreeda has never shown much talent for (or interest in) humor, but Doona Bae manages to convey some of the director's most charming and amusing scenes to date. The concept isn't entirely convincing, but that's hardly Doona Bae's fault.

In his less impressive moments, Koreeda doesn't seem to show full command of his pivotal concepts. Even his popular **After Life** (2004), tackles its subject less as plot than as a series of recollections. The director seems more than satisfied letting things happen, never explaining much, and revealing small things about human nature along the way. **Air Doll's** concept seems daring, but its execution doesn't seem equal to its potential.

ABSENT RECORDS



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FINALLY, the much anticipated follow-up to the2009 demofrom these rubber glove wearing maniacs! Fast, aggressive, and in your face. This is some real knock-your-teeth-out type stuff here. Dope fiends rejoyce! Ear ripping riffs with grilling vocals and head pounding drums bring this record together to make it come alive! Free penthouse scratch and sniff insert! Six tracks of spiral grooves capture the bands live intensity and blow it out of your speakers, a lot like like sticking your hand into a wood chipper! This is not the record to miss out on! Comparable to early Poison Idea, Jerrys Kids or The Faith.

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ACROSS THE BORDER – "Hag Songs" CD

This is all pretty much in German, but as far as I can ascertain, back in 1994, these young Germans started doing the souped-up folky thing. Acoustic guitars, mandolins, and violins, bass and drums and whatnot, though 'cos it was played by badly dressed punks with dreadlocks and tattoos, it somehow wasn't really folk music, but folk-punk or somesuch. Don't get me wrong, I actually dig the genre (if not the dreadlocks). Lyric sensibility is highly (left) political—thumbs up. And the instrumentation is pretty good too. Singing is pretty dreadful, and some of the songs are pretty clumsy, especially the slaughtering of BILLY BRAGG's "A New England." They reprise a new recording of their anti-nationalist "anthem" "I Can't Love This Country," which improves on the original, so mebbe there's life in the old bad haircuts yet. (RK)
(Twisted Chords)

THE AFTERNOON GENTLEMEN – "Pissed Again" EP

If you are a grind enthusiast tired of overly tech-y, ego-stroking shit with no semblance of the beauty, soul or classical grind roots, I suggest you pick this up. I dig this record. It's tough as shit and totally turns me on. Seriously. I am a sucker for its fierce blastbeats, chugga chugga, hardcore breakdowns and powerviolence moments that remind me that if I ever make it to a show of theirs in Leeds, UK, I will be surrounded by a bunch of shirtless sweaty dudes stomping around. Think a little INFEST, some DESPISE YOU, lots of PLF. The vocals range from screechy highs to throaty lows and the recording is spot-on for the music—polished, but not overdone. You can hear everything that is going on. It sounds as if the music is a perfect blend of talent, heart and well thought-out composition. There is a lot going on, but it all works. The lyrics mostly deal with getting fucked up and being homeless; the artwork includes an awesome illustration with this crazy tentacled monster invading a bearded dudes face. Sweet... (MB)
(Keep Screaming / Undislessed / Divergent Series / Active Rebellion / etc.)

ALMAX / MISTKÄFER – Split LP

Generic and forgettable hardcore punk from these two Spanish bands. This is cool, but there's nothing that stands out. ALMAX also suffers from a clean production, which just doesn't work for a band trying to play nasty punk like this. (JH)
(Mala Raza)

AMISH ELECTRIC CHAIR – "Straight, No Chaser" CD

Melodic, metallic mid-tempo hardcore with kinda screechy vocals and group backing vocals on the choruses. There's very little here that sticks out for me...though they do have a song called "Jellico, Tennesee" and I do like song titles that are place names, so if you're doing a US-towns-and-places-themed compilation tape you might want to check this out. Otherwise... (AD)
(Geykido Comet)

THE AMISTAD – "Kept Under by a Generation of Ghosts" CD

I know I have reviewed previous records by this band, but nothing really stands out from those records. This is some UK pop that reminds me a bit of CARRIE NATIONS, if they had more technical guitar parts and a less dancey sound. The layout of this CD is really nice—it seems to be mimicking the layout of a book, with artwork adorning the header to each chapter, or in this case, song. (BD)
(Bombed Out)

APPALCHIAN TERROR UNIT – "It's Far From Fucking Over" CD

West Virginia political crust disc compiling tracks from the *Greenwashing* and *Armageddon*... records with a few extra tracks. Super heavy dual-vocal assault with uncompromising attacks on government, industry and system. Not a bad word to say about this; total top-notch crust that doesn't delve into either the metal that tends to make these bands either too generic, or the melodic guitars that tend to make them all sound like Swedish clones. Solid. (WN)
(Profane Existence)

ARMS ALOFT – "Comfort at Any Cost" CD

This CD has six songs in all, four of which were originally released last year on an EP of the same title. If you like Midwest-style pop-punk, this one is for you. ARMS ALOFT fits in perfectly with any band from their corner of the world: BANNER PILOT, DILLINGER FOUR, OFF WITH THEIR HEADS, take your pick. If any of those bands tickle your fancy, this disc would probably delight you. (BD)
(Gilead Media)

THE ASOUND / FLAT TIRES – split EP

The FLAT TIRES side gives bar rock a good (well, better) name. I could see them making a horde of liquored-up cretins lose their shit. Fuckin' revved-up, wild rock'n'roll, with a bit of a heavy edge, reminding me of the sweet (but lyrically sketchy) CHINESE MILLIONAIRES song off the *Blasts from the Basement* 7" comp. The lyrics are not exactly inspiring ("Goddamn woman, get outta my face / Gonna have to put you in your place") while the second song denigrates those domestic partners who would come between the band and their bros binging at the bar. You're a dumbass that you're in such a relationshit anyway. The ASOUNDS go for a slower, dronier, and far less successful attempt at rock; I can't imagine this side getting a lot of plays. FLAT TIRES is some shit Bruce R. would play loud as fuck and say hell yeah. I rate it short

of crucial, but I see what he's getting' at. (JM)
(Tsuguri / Cockfight / Zodiac Killer)

THE ASSASINATORS – "Rumors of War" CD

The most immediately notable facet of Washington State's ASSASINATORS (spelled the punk way, of course) is the vocals, which find a middle ground somewhere between the raspy delivery of Mark Noah of the ANTI-HEROS and Dave Mustaine's "Hello me, meet the *real* me" character from that MEGADETH video. I'm getting a VERBAL ABUSE vibe from the music (a little *Just an American Band*, a little *Rocks Your Liver*), which is rough and catchy, though not especially distinctive punk rock. The lyrics run the gamut from conspiracy-theory fare ("New World Mafia," "Pathological") to, well, beer and partying... at least I think that's what he's talking about in the song "Lock and Load": "Beer, beer, what a hoot / The more you drink, the more you puke / Wish I may, wish I might / Kick your fucking ass tonight." Ten tracks including an ANGRY SAMOANS cover. Pixilation is abundant throughout the artwork. This CD is a couple years old and I think they just released a new one. (CS)
(Beer Metal)

THE ASSASINATORS – "Weaving Spiders Come Not Here" CD

Northwest Pyrate Punx, not to be confused with the Danish ASSASSINATORS (whose split with DSB is reviewed in this same issue). After the name, the similarities end, as these drunks play extended-middle-finger punk rock with no frills and a few yo metal parts (listen to the drums at the end of "Econarchy" and tell my I'm wrong). The included GG ALLIN and RANCID covers give you a pretty good idea where these grown up kids are coming from... "Eenie meanie miney moe / Punch a fucker in the throat." Seriously, you think I could make that shit up? Up the punx, that is. (WN)
(self-released)

THE ASSASSINATORS / DSB – split EP

It's always a pleasure getting a new record from the venerable DSB. I guess these Japanese hardcore stalwarts been around long enough that I can refer to them as venerable, right? Their side of this split has two new ones, recorded last spring. Nothing different, just the same solid hardcore they've been producing for about a generation now. These aren't as fast as the songs on *No Fight No Get* or *Wings Continue to Strive with Unchanged Mind*, but DSB still play some fucking great hardcore. I wish American bands would take lessons on aging gracefully from their Japanese counterparts. Compare these tracks to any recent AGNOSTIC FRONT, or listen to the last LPs from BAD BRAINS and GAUZE back to back, and you start to get a little ashamed to be an American (if you weren't already). ASSASSINATORS, the other band on this split, are one of those whose name I've always seen around but I've never bothered to check out. They play poppy hardcore/punk with mostly sung vocals, and really aren't my cup of tea. Robert Collins thinks they're pretty good, though, so I'm sure if you're into that style then you'll like them. Buy this for the DSB tracks. (VX)
(Alerta Antifascista / Halo of Flies)

THE ATOM AGE – "Kill Surf City" CD

Apparently, this band is from right across the Bay but I've never heard of them...not that it means anything. I don't know. Is this band supposed to be punk because they play fast and the singer screams while he sings? It just sounds like bar rock to me, but also vaguely like the DICTATORS with a saxaphone. Take that as you will. In the liner notes, it says "Autotune was not used on this recording, asshole." Score one for the ATOM AGE. Next. (GH)
(Solidarity)

ATTITUDE ADJUSTMENT – "The Collection" CD

Just the *American Paranoia* cover alone floods my mind with memories of skating dilapidated half-pipes in the '80s and trying to land that goddamn fast plant without killing myself. This band and the ACCUSED were all the rage among the *Thrasher Magazine* worshipping set, and the buzzsaw guitar assault and sonic drum blasts did get you all hyped up and sort of nihilistic enough to push yourself further and try crazy tricks. And aside from providing a soundtrack for skating, the live shows were fucking insane and had some of the craziest mosh pits ever witnessed! But as awesome as all of this was, I couldn't quite fully appreciate the metal/thrash crossover sound that this band (and others) was going for, so I was by no means a huge fan and I never listened to the other two albums. Naturally I assumed they would be pure metal since so many thrash bands went in that direction. So here we are some 20 years later with a handy CD that compiles all three albums these dudes put out, and I'm pleased to discover that the second two LPs, *No More Mr. Nice* Guy and *Out of Hand*, are along the same lines as the classic debut: pure, untainted thrashcore. I'm still not big on the crossover thing, but boy does this sound good right now. This collection has good sound quality and comes with lyrics as well. If you were at all a fan of ATTITUDE ADJUSTMENT or, later on, any of the Y2K thrash bands, then this collection is absolutely essential. (BG)
(Taang)

A.U.K. – "Rise/Where are Your Gods"

These dudes are definitely not going for originality! This is some old-school anarcho-crust punk that has a heavy KILLING JOKE influence, which is definitely my favorite thing about the record. Although AMEBIX had that same influence, A.U.K. seem to be getting their KILLING JOKE straight from KILLING JOKE rather than AMEBIX, if you know what I mean. In part this might be due to the fact that A.U.K. are ex-members of first-generation anarcho-punk band ALTERNATIVE. The lyrics are very standard-fare anarcho lyrics and the music is pretty lo-fi and dry. All this amounts to a cult release done in a traditional anarcho-punk fashion. It's released on Tadpole Records, home of countrymates BURNT CROSS (with whom they also did a split CD!). I dig. (DB)
(Tadpole / Loud Punk)

BACKSLIDER / CHAINSAW TO THE FACE – split EP

A 21-track split 7" from these two great grindcore/powerviolence bands. CHAINSAW TO THE FACE is from New Jersey and plays grindcore meets hardcore. A little bit like HELLNATION or ASSUCK. They change speeds a lot and have a few slow, heavy feedback moments. I loved their split with HUMMINGBIRD OF DEATH and these tracks are just as good. BACKSLIDER is a two-person band from Philadelphia with a classic powerviolence sound that is a dead ringer for LACK OF INTEREST—lots of stop 'n' go parts combined with a singer who does vocals just like the aforementioned. (MH)
(Blastcat)

BAD PARENTS – "Purple Heart" EP

Pretty good stuff from Long Beach, CA. Elements of the SCIENTISTS, STARVATIONS and KILLING JOKE are all present, but the recording is pretty poor quality; it sounds as if the band did it at a practice with a four-track. These songs would sound better had they been recorded in a studio or with a better engineer. The important thing is that the songs are good, and they'll be in my head as I'm walking away. (MU)
(Resurrection)

BAD TASTE – "I Was a Teenage Jack the Ripper" EP

Nine dirty, rotten songs crammed on this great 7", most not even coming close to a minute long. The quick, in-and-out blasts might not approach the brutal briskness of a band like ANAL CUNT, but will probably satisfy your late-'80s/early-'90s hardcore/thrash cravings nonetheless. Absolutely *killllllller* cover of "Summertime Blues" wraps up this great EP. (IS)
(Crotch Rot / Feral Kid)

BAYONETTES – "Guilty Pleasure/Outta My Mind"

A posthumous release for this Toronto band. Their previous 7"s were much appreciated around McNaughton Manor and this tasty little platter is growing on me like penicillin on the pasta sauce that time forgot in the back of the fridge. Driving '70s punk propelling dynamic and edgy female vocals with just a hint of Kathleen Hanna to them. Sad that this band broke up—what are they doing now? Answers on a postcard... (AM)
(Deranged)

THE BESTIES – "Terrible and True/Take 'Em All" EP

This is #47 in the Art of the Underground Singles Series and it's a great addition. I'm usually the first to talk some shit on this kind of bubblegum, good-time indie rock, but this band has won me over. The A-side has good melodies and it's upbeat enough that it made me (literally) tap my toes. The flipside has (no shit) a COCK SPARRER cover! Totally unexpected, especially since it doesn't give them credit for the song anywhere on the sleeve. The late Bruce Roehrs would probably have a snide, yet constructive, word or two about that for these lads. This record rules in a lazy-day-at-home sort of way. (GH)
(Art of the Underground)

BIRDS IN ROW – "Rise of the Phoenix" EP

BIRDS IN ROW from France play a very modern form of hardcore, the kind that many readers of this magazine probably would refuse to even identify as such. There are no traces of BAD BRAINS, MINOR THREAT, NEGATIVE APPROACH or BLACK FLAG here. The music is heavy yet melodic, fast without really being fast, and altogether cleaner sounding than anything the '80s produced. This could be called screamo, but it doesn't sound much of anything like PORTRAITS OF PAST or any of the other Ebullition bands. A couple of easy comparisons would be COMADRE and GHOSTLIMB. If you're into those bands you might want to pick this up. (VX)
(Vitriol / Distorted Charly Brown / etc.)

BLACK BUG – "Razor Face" LP

This really isn't punk, but maybe dance music for punks (like old Chicago Wax Trax!). I can see MIKA MIKO fans digging it. This awesome release was put out by the FDH label out of Philly, which has cranked out some awesomely eccentric and ahead-of-our-times music. BLACK BUG delivers a mix of synth/keyboard and drum machine (a Korg 808/909 sim sound?) with live, heavy bass. It's somewhere between electro and IDM, but with a JOY DIVISION feel, especially in the male vocals and atmospheric, repetitive songs. The female vocals remind me of Nikki Corvette. Fans of NTX+ELECTRIC will dig this. It's a little more dancy and less artsy, but in all fairness, NTX has been killing this sound a little better since 2005. If you are into this type of music, which I very much am, I would say definitely get this record. The whole thing is interesting and makes you want to listen to it over and over because the beats are driving and you will catch all the stuff you didn't before. I think I will be buying everything this band puts out. There are only 500 of this album, so get to it!! (MB)
(FDH)

BLACK MAMBA BEAT – LP

This record has that classy recorded-on-a-boombox sound quality that I dig. Song-wise they kind of run the gamut—the first side wandered somewhere between new wave and garage, second side is steeped in shambolic '90s indie rock and they sound slightly bored with it. As it goes on, it delves even deeper into PAVEMENT crossed with DEAD MILKMEN. It really reminds me of playing music with this one dude where his lyrics were rhyme-y and slightly goofy and he would come up with the most shit-tastic indie-twee-type guitar riffs but everything else was golden. (MM)
(Jeetkune)

BLACK MARKET FETUS / BRODY'S MILITIA – "Unhindered by Scum" split EP

Right away I noticed the cover as a parody of NAPALM DEATH's *Scum* art. Oddly enough the artwork seems to depict a concert for the dead masses and the band names of some crappy heavy and classic rock bands all over. Odd....even a HAWKWIND t-shirt on some sort of dead dude. Right, the music—well, looking at the track listing, there is another hint of a semi-tribute to early grindcore. Each band plays a couple originals but in addition, BLACK MARKET FETUS does a cover of NAPALM DEATH's "Human Garbage" and BRODY'S MILITIA does covers of SORE THROAT's "The Crossover Is Over" and "The Return of the Son of the Crossover Is Over." Both bands rip through some great new grindcore tracks. Good stuff. (MH)
(Give Praise)

BLACK TAMBOURINE – LP

BLACK TAMBOURINE was a Washington, DC-area band around for a couple years in the late-'80s/early-'90s, playing only a handful of shows and releasing a pair of 7"s. In their sound are many of the hallmarks of UK noise-pop—guitars alternating between jangly riffs and full-on JESUS AND MARY CHAIN-style feedback, shambolic delivery, etc.—though BLACK TAMBOURINE blended it with a sort of updated '60s garage/pop feel (drawing perhaps on the same classic influences that inspired Joey Ramone). Since their dissolution almost 20 years ago, the members have gone on to other projects (VELOCITY GIRL, Slumberland Records, many more); in the meantime, BLACK TAMBOURINE wasn't entirely forgotten, becoming somewhat of a cult band whose few releases were sought after and cherished by some. In recent years their profile has been raised by the mainstream-indie popularity of groups like the VIVIAN GIRLS and DUM DUM GIRLS who have either directly or indirectly incorporated elements of BLACK TAMBOURINE's sound into their own. Context aside, this record is a cool collection of diverse and memorable tunes marked by catchy hooks and haunting, ethereal vocals. I especially dig the newly unearthed demo version of the band's obvious anthem "Throw Aggi Off the Bridge"—it perfectly captures a fragile balance between naïve innocence and self-assured certainty of intent in each ringing guitar chord and echo of feedback. Highly recommended for the more pop-friendly readers out there. (CS)
(Slumberland)

BOBOT ADRENALINE – "Dumb Bomb" CD

This really reminds me of a late-'90s Boston-area band called the SHODS...pop-ish punk that's a little CLASH, a little *American Idiot*, with an occasional Broadway "Putting on the Ritz" type swagger. Produced by Tommy Stinson. (JU)
(Basement)

BRICK MOWER – "Floors" CD

Turn back the clock to 1988 for what was called "college rock"—now known as "indie." Six college rock songs in the DINOSAUR JR. and GUIDED BY VOICES vein. A little flat-sounding but still a nice change of pace. (RL)
(Viking on Campus)

BROKEN – "Active Denial" CD

Who would think that a CD with such bad artwork would contain music this good? BROKEN rips through six tough hardcore tracks on this disc but you can't easily pigeonhole their sound. I hear some late-'80s NYC hardcore, some metal and some street-punk but it's not easy to pin down, which is good. "U-232" is fast and at moments borders on grindcore but then the gang chorus is slow and could be a street-punk band. "Active Denial" has up-front NYCHC barked vocals and is a tough sounding hardcore track. I like anthems that deal with social issues. Sort of reminds me of old SICK OF IT ALL. Then "Making Everyone Happy Really Pisses Me Off/The New Black" has late-'80s hardcore written all over it. Good stuff. Too bad about the artwork. (MH)
(Vex)

BROKEN PATTERNS – "Germs" EP

When I hear somebody say throwback, I typically expect to hear something that sounds like it came from the late '70s. The new throwback is hardcore. This reminds me of LA or San Francisco circa 1980. It's got elements of the ADOLESCENTS, the DEAD KENNEDYS and, more recently, the STITCHES. While it might not be the most original record to come out recently, it is done well. (KK)
(Six Feet Under)

BROKEN PATTERNS – "Stereotype" EP

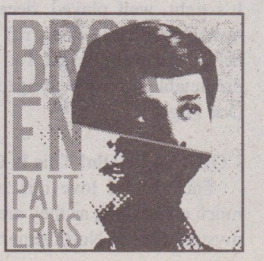
The vocals on this 7" are super annoying. They are kind of flat and monotonous, but high-pitched and sing-songy. Sometimes that can be OK, but in this case it doesn't work. They need some wildly interesting or at least different sounding music to back them up and take the edge off; unfortunately, the music here is straightforward punk: three chords, no frills. However, this 7" is available in an edition of 500 with cool screen-printed covers. (CK)
(Six Feet Under)

BROKEN WATER – "Whet" LP

Whet is the debut LP from the Olympia, WA band BROKEN WATER featuring members of SISTERS and CELEBRATION. The pulsing, gloomy vibrations emitted from this record teeter between mid/late-'80s-era SONIC YOUTH worship and the mid-'90s take on that idea—*120 Minutes* woulda swallowed up any Hitchcockian-inspired video off this record in a heartbeat. BROKEN WATER's guitar-driven songs elude a pillow-y comfort, and it's unclear if that's mostly nostalgia induced or if it's also due to the blanket of gushing, beautiful apathy created by even production, swells of noise, and swoony lyrics. Either way it's nice. (AL)
(Night People)

BURNING LOVE – "Lives of the Saints" EP

This five-song EP is in fact the BURNING LOVE demo, given



a little love by the Deranged camp who went ahead and issued it as a proper release. That alone tells me these guys are making a name for themselves up in cold, cold Canada. Upon further inspection I found that these guys are fronted by hardcore vet and lightening-rod Chris Colohan. I must admit I was shocked when I found this out, as BURNING LOVE has little in common with (all-time personal faves) the SWARM, LEFT FOR DEAD, RUINATION or CURSED. That seems to be the point though—a new direction and a new challenge. I can respect that, but wonder why everywhere I looked for information on this band (including the labels website) they were billed as Chris Colohan's new project? Hmph. As for the record itself, I was a bit disappointed. Not that I was expecting or hoping for a new LEFT FOR DEAD record, especially with a name like BURNING LOVE, but with the obvious attempt at keeping company like BORN DEAD ICONS, BURNING LEATHER, MOTÖRHEAD, and POISON IDEA, these songs just don't hold up. They do keep a feverish mid-pace, belt out the tuff-as-nails vocals and have *killer* punch-in solos to boot. I'm just not feelin' it. Curious to see if these guys can change my mind with future releases, but time will have to tell. (RM)
(Deranged)

BUSSCOPS / DEFECT DEFECT – split CD

Oh Brazil, why must you be so far away and create such great music? Am I gonna have to sell some plasma and get my ass over there?! Fucking BUSSCOPS! The vocals kill me! I love that high-pitched yet gritty and throaty style, sorta reminiscent of Martin from CRUDOS. Musically, these songs have some D-beat smatterings with a shit-ton of awesome thrash slashing through Brazilian hardcore and some metal tossed in. I hear some CRO-MAGS, some RATOS DE PORÃO… This is sort of my dream band right now—no shit. The DEFECT DEFECT tracks are that catchy and melodic sound that they are known for. They make for good dancing at a show, but are overshadowed by the BUSSCOPS tracks—yet different enough to keep interest. (MB)
(Sweet)

CAPPUTTINI'I LIGNU – LP

Once upon a time this would've been written off as yet another WHITE STRIPES knock-off. You have a guy, a girl, a guitar and a sparse drumset pounding out blues garage. Get it? And hell, I guess that comparison still holds up, though to more attuned ears you'll hear something a little more raw, more akin to '68 COMEBACK, GIBSON BROTHERS or any of Jeffrey Evans's bands…though not nearly as rabid. Moments sound a lot like BRIMSTONE HOWL even. Solid through and through and worth a listen if garagey punk/blues is your thing. (IS)
(Jeetkune)

COBRA – "Cobra Is Back" CD

Guess by the title these ol' timer street punks and skins are back with a new batch of songs. Never a big fan and this ain't really changing my mind. It's tight, well played, decent production but I find myself predicting every riff and chorus in each song before it's even played. Too generic, by the book and predictable for my well-aged palate. (SD)
(Joe Pogo)

COBRA – "Hello! This Is Cobra" CD

Fuck yes! I love this band!! I don't know too much about them as they are from Japan and sort of a mystery here in North America. They've been around forever it seems—since the early '80s in fact—and in the days before the internet it was like striking gold to actually find anything by these guys, yet they have achieved major label success in Japan. Hell, they've even played at Budokan, which puts them in a class along with the likes of CHEAP TRICK!! COBRA cites their influences as British Oi along the lines of COCKNEY REJECTS, but on this brand new material I am also hearing a sound that reminds me of another one of my all-time favourite bands, the REDUCERS SF!! This shit is so energetic that I just want to jump up and down when I listen to it and it's melodic as hell with massive sing-along choruses (all sung in a mish-mash of Japanese and English!). Fuck bands like the CASUALTIES and all that Warped Tour shit… This is what you should all be listening to!!! (ML)
(Joe Pogo)

COMMON ENEMY – "Living the Dream" LP

East Coast party skate thrash. Metallic palm-muted guitars, songs about having fun and skating and getting wastehammered. COMMON ENEMY stays close enough to the formula that it's kinda tough to review, 'cause it sounds like party skate thrash, and I already said that in the first sentence, but this is executed with near flawless precision, and every member of this band can play their asses off. COMMON ENEMY: get amongst this shit. (WN)
(Overdose on Records)

THE COMRADES – "Faceless Landscape" CD

This New Jersey band (that apparently started in 1983) plays twelve songs of catchy punk with intelligent lyrics, and comes off like a mix of first-singer-era DROPKICK MURPHYS and PROPAGHANDI, without the slickness of either. (JU)
(Vadamarah)

CONDOMINIUM – "Gag" EP

"Gag" is a slow yet flailing rock odyssey that made me feel like I was an ADD-'n'-zit-addled teen, because I swiftly lost interest in finding out what was going to happen next. It's a pre-grunge Midwestern dirge that'll either draw you in or make you flip it over to the other side. This made me go and grab all of their previous records and make sure I actually liked this band as much as I thought I did. The first two 7"s are some of my favorite hardcore 45s of recent years, particularly the second one, and I *like* dirgy, fucked-up hardcore with a heavy Greg Ginn/late-FLAG/FLIPPER feel, especially with disparaging Midwestern vibes. I still think CONDOMINIUM is one of the most compelling hardcore bands, and I am not sure why this record isn't hitting me the right way. I have seriously listened to it over and over and over again trying to figure it out. (LG)
(Deer Healer)

THE CREDENTIALS – "Routines" LP

This is one of those bands that really shines in a loud, totally blown-out recording—which is what this LP is. Fast, poppy punk that rips apart all of their First World Problems, such as relationships, crappy jobs and walking around your boring ass-town. It's like reading an issue of *Cometbus* from the '90s while listening to, uh… '90s DIY pop-punk. Nothing new here, but these guys are doing a good job at kicking out the rock. They're probably a great band to see in a basement, so see them when they are on tour this summer. As a sidenote, this record is the most beautiful vinyl I've ever seen in my life. (GH)
(self-released)

CRIME – "Extortion" EP

First two tracks on the A-side are CRIME by themselves, which is not that far off from the early releases minus some of that rawness and danger that endeared them to so many. The B has collaboration with traditional Moroccan band GNAWA EXPRESS (is this a wind-up?). Anyways, one track that basically has CRIME rockin' some kraut-rock over some Arabian-Nights-type jam, which might sound like a bag of steamy camel turds but actually works—in fact I'm getting contact high just listen to this. I like getting high. (SD)
(FYBS)

CRITICAL CONVICTIONS – "The Crisis of Modernity" EP

Wickedly thrashing hardcore from Ottawa with slathering vocals shrieked out over the speeding mass—not quite as fast and screamy as say, PUNCH, not as old-school hardcore as CAREER SUICIDE, but somewhere in between the two. Simple detonations of straight-for-the-throat hardcore with basic breakdowns and a hammering snare drum assault. A bit more guitar heft and distinction in the cadence of the vocals—they're largely flatlined on the same level of spewing vocalization—would probably solidify this debut, but it's a strong outing with lyrics attacking gentrification, Israeli aggression, modern ennui, contradictions of the hardcore scene and more. Numbered out of 300 copies. (KS)
(self-released)

CROW'S FOOT / DESERTER – split EP

There's something about this record that is so refreshing. The music is mostly evocative of '90s acts—ANTISCHISM, SEDITION, and SCATHA on the CROW'S FOOT side and HEROIN, JOHN HENRY WEST, DOWNCAST, some sludge à la GRIEF and some more melodic death/black metal on the DESERTER side. There's a sincerity, passion, and urgency to these songs that reminds me of my initial attraction to the hardcore scene of the early-to-mid-'90s. Not that this style is non-existent, it's just not currently as pervasive within the mainstream of today's underground punk and hardcore scenes. The lyrics are honest, personal, fairly positive and totally political in a very straightforward way. Very little metaphor here. One of the things I like the most is the production—it's not very big, not too compressed, sounds (a)live. Ultimately, what strikes me the most about this record is just the raw transparency of it. With the sound, the lyrics, the aesthetic—what you see is what you get. If these bands had a bigger, shinier production I'd be bummed. It might strip a lot of the '90s crust, emotive hardcore vibe. The lyrics are translated into Spanish and the covers are stitched together. No plastic. Limited to 500. If you're into raw, passionate, melodic, crusty hardcore in a '90s way, this is the jam. This record is really…real. (DB)
(Never Give Up)

CRUSADERS OF LOVE – "Never Grow Up" LP

Surprise, surprise: more perfectly executed '79-style power-pop from the Douchemaster label. CRUSADERS OF LOVE hail from Lille, France, but this stuff could have come from Cleveland or Cambridge. Poppy as an opium field, with the cocky swagger of the coolest guy at the party, and a recording that is clean enough, but not too clean: like they've skipped the shower for a day or two and masked the odor with some *Eau de Cologne*. Hey, they *are* French. If you enjoyed the GENTLEMAN JESSE LP

from last year (or the year before?) you'll love this. (AM)
(Douchemaster)

CURRO JIMENEZ – "Primera Temporada" EP

Relatively newer band from Madrid delivers some punk'n'roll not too distant from, let's say, TURBONEGRO with a bit more speed at times. There are some decent harmonies thrown in the songwriting that get the toes tapping. I get the impression this band is fun to see live; on disc they aren't too bad so if you like your punk leaning heavily on the rock'n'roll check this out. (MS)
(Gssh Gssh)

DAILY VOID – "The Eclipse of 1453" 12"

DAILY VOID always delivers an interesting combination of cool musical sounds and piercing vocals. The music stomps and plods along, building and building without ever seeming to return. It is primitive sounding, but also angular, creative and fun. The vocals are harsh and mean, but occasionally go off into goth territory. I don't mind that. It's always good to mix it up. This record is very cool, but I wish some day they would deliver some more songs as catchy as "(Surprise Surprise) You've Lost Your Eyes." (CK)
(Sacred Bones)

DAMN LASER VAMPIRES – "Gotham Beggars Syndicate" CD

Dark, primal and (dare I say) primitive garage rock 'n' roll from the land more known for its football kickin' skills—Brazil. A nice, trashed-up '50s feel with a CRAMPS-on-steroids vibe. It's almost out of control in that retro garage stomp kind of way but still manages to hold on to the groove. A sci-fi surf vibe bubbles to the surface, bringing to mind the more raw days of MAN OR ASTROMAN. They've even managed to sneak in some of that goth sound with a nice JESUS AND MARYCHAIN feel. I like... in fact, I like a lot. Brilliant. (SD)
(Devils Ruin)

DANGERS – "Messy, Isn't It" LP

Woah. New DANGERS LP and it's just about as intense as you'd expect; it doesn't approach domination of their live show, but the aggression and smug intellectual bend they try so hard for is really sequenced into a strong and definitive album with *Messy, Isn't It*. The unbridled rage luckily eclipses the raw but deliberate ebullition somehow, and the whole record is fucking nuts. I don't understand how these songs get written; it's almost A.D.D.-style, but they keep it together. The packaging is over the top and super incredible, complete with *both* the vinyl and compact disc version of the album and a poster to hang above your bed. Sexy. (RM)
(Vitriol / Penguin Suit)

DAY BY DAY – "Animal Abuse Is Nothing Bygone" LP

"DAY BY DAY, huh?" I thought as I flipped through the review bin, "I wonder if I'm in for some GENERATION X worship... What the fuck is that on the cover?" The stark black and white photo of a tortured primate in a vivisection lab tells me, no, this will not be good-time BILLY IDOL music. Turns out DAY BY DAY was a German punk band from the first half of the 1990s; *Animal Abuse Is Nothing Bygone* collects their two proper releases and includes some comp tracks, a song from their demo and some unreleased practice material. Early on, the band mixed (often in the same song) straightforward, mid-to-fast-tempo punk à la BAD RELIGION and melodic HC with singing vocals reminiscent of the JOYCE MCKINNEY EXPERIENCE or HARUM SCARUM. I was not expecting the *Feel the Darkness*-era POISON IDEA cover; it's ambitious but not entirely successful. By their second and final EP, DAY BY DAY had really cranked up the melody, and the more cohesive songwriting benefited them greatly. A couple classics here. On the whole, the lyrics dealt with animal rights and other political issues and in at least a few instances transcended the typical fare and deliver some poignant insight. This album includes an insert with lyrics and a couple paragraphs in both German and English about the band. A cool retrospective from a group that evolved into LOST WORLD after calling it quits. (CS)
(Twisted Chords)

DAYLIGHT ROBBERY – LP

I hate to say it, because nearly every time there are dual male/female vocals people bring up John Doe and Exene, but yeah, there is a definite X appeal to this band... The urgency of their sound, and the way that Christine and David's voices fit each other so perfectly, it's a similar desperation, a searing yet tuneful attack. The guitar evokes GREG SAGE so totally, which I know is another reference that people bring up in abandon and without merit. This band evokes the urgency apparent in X, with none of the rockabilly flourishes, replacing them with a WIPERS-style attack. They have a ferocity of intent that places them firmly in the current age. The lyrics are personal with a political bite, rather than some loose-ended "personal is political" per-zine boredom, they contain pointed reflections on community and identity. There's a sort of paranoid, desperate feel to this sound, the way their voices hit me—that guitar, it makes me think of late-night walks with headphones, kind of in the same way that the OBSERVERS LP did. I would put this LP up there with *So What's Left Now*. Seriously. I am ashamed to admit that I paid no attention to DAYLIGHT ROBBERY at all until Mariam arrived and put me right. I love this record and it's been on the turntable constantly since it arrived. Year-end top ten material for sure. (LG)
(Residue)

DEADLINE – "Two Heads (Are Better Than One)" EP

This appears to be something of a best-of EP with tracks previously released up to seven years ago, but the band's style of punk is consistent and can best be described by the cover they chose to do as a B-side (the NERVES' "Hangin on the Telephone"). The last track, "Take No Chances," also reminds me a bit of the GITS and BAD RELIGION, which is largely due to the crunchy guitar. My favorite track is the title, which is like, 100th-wave ska or something, and also sounds a lot like BANANARAMA. DEADLINE keeps it mid-tempo and easy and I wouldn't turn it off if I was drunk-driving over the Golden Gate Bridge. They hit all the notes perfectly and all the tracks are recorded really evenly and clearly. I'm having a vision of punks-with-careers in San Francisco wasted at a bar crying during their set. (HD)
(Longshot Music)

DEAD WIFE – "D.W.S.Y.H.F." EP

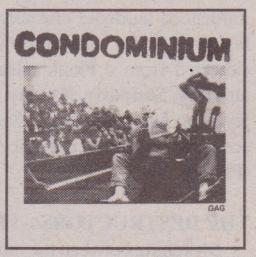
No fucking around *raaaggggeerrr*! Everything I have a boner for all packed into seven inches. Shit recordings, screaming grrl vocals, herky-jerky stops and starts, radical feminism, desperate speeds and just enough sludge. It's like RED AUNTS being FLIPPER playing hardcore. Such fucking perfection. Get it now!!!!! (MM)
(Psychic Handshake / No Vacation)

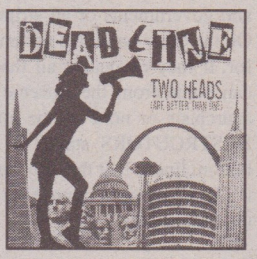
DEATH FIRST – "Rock Camp" EP

These kids are playing basic and fast hardcore. They songs are decent, but nothing that's gonna stick with you. The singer's strong voice—like TREASON off the PEACE comp--cuts across the music, which the production dulled a bit, taking away some of their power. This is the kind of record you'd be stoked on after you saw the band and they were rad kids, but I don't think this EP has captured the best the band is capable of. (JM)
(Destroy Me)

THE DECAY – "This Month's Rent" CD

Great, solid melodic punk from (I think) Canada. It sounds a little OFF WITH THEIR HEADS but with a kind of street-punk CRIMPSHRINE twist...or an upbeat HOT WATER MUSIC. The singer has a great cracked voice and the emotion oozes out of this thing, while all the time there's a steady pace and energy. The songs are very well written and I have to say that this is really very good and a quality effort. (AD)
(self-released)





DEFENDERS – "Animal Eyes" EP

Brand new posthumous release from the obscurest of early '80s Long Beach punks you've never heard of! These guys existed from 1981-1986, playing all the old Hollywood punk haunts, and I imagine their name adorns some now-coveted early LA flyers. These two tracks were culled from previously unreleased 1982 studio tapes recently unearthed by singer Paul's son and current CLOROX GIRL Justin who also covered the A-side on an early single. Sound is what you might expect for beach punks circa 1982—guitars and production recall the CHEIFS and other *Who Cares* LP comp faves, with unique goth-tinged crooned vocals. I particularly enjoy the B-side. 200 pressed on green vinyl, 800 on black. (GB)
(17 Television)

DESOLATION – "Rest in Panic" EP

Dudes, I gotta be honest—I was gonna tell you "No Steps Forward" needed a guitar solo really badly. Of course, as I was lamenting the lack of shred I didn't yet know that all I had to do was flip the record and get my fix from the ripping lead in "Rest in Panic." My bad for listening to the B-side first, I suppose. Not surprisingly, the Bay's own apocalyptic Japanese-influenced hardcore crushers deliver the goods. Two fast ones and a mid-tempo burner on the flip. As is expected from a Prank release, it looks and sounds amazing. Seriously, if every label practiced the same level of quality control that Prank does, the punk scene would be a better place. (AU)
(Prank)

THE DESTRUCTORS – "Politika" CD

Switching between the monikers DESTRCUTORS 666, DESTRUCTORS and *THE* DESTRUCTORS (the difference an article can make!), frontman Allen Adams has kept this band going since 1976. Over that time they've had several dozen different members, yet the sound has stayed remarkably consistent, focusing mostly on mid-paced old school British punk rock. This latest release features some more modern flourishes, notably a clean production and some metal in the guitars, but by-and-large the song structures haven't changed over the last 34 years. This is a concept album, with every song focusing on anti-electoral politics. THE DESTRUCTORS are against the Labour Party, the Tories, the European Union, Leninists, Trotskyists, socialists, capitalists, the whole fucking lot. They have a basic distrust of politicians and governments of all stripes that I find refreshing. On the other hand, it's not entirely clear what they're for, if they're against all that. Anti-electoral politics can come from the extreme left, the extreme right, anarchists or none of the above, so where do THE DESTRCUTORS stand? A good question, but the bottom line is that this is a very enjoyable record. Pity it's CD-only right now. (VX)
(self-released)

DIET COKEHEADS – "Nasal" 45

I saw a picture of this band before I heard them, and I was sort of ready for some NEON BLUD Florida nastiness… Kids that were probably born in the '90s getting into the Richard Kern era of SONIC YOUTH, SWANS and so forth, but filtering it through their house-show hardcore visions. Some of these bands seem so corny—suburban art-school kids disdaining their embarrassing pasts for a future of streamlined BRAINBOMBS-saturated blogposts and medieval imagery. *But!* DIET COKEHEADS have a savage energy; listening to this you can feel a disregard for the regular that any punk could relate to. I like the dual male/female vocals, too… Definitely need to see this band play. (LG)
(Drugged Conscience / Vinyl Rites)

DIET COKEHEADS – "Oral" 45

Floridian noise-rocker trio who creeps slowly into deep-cutting tough-guy Touch & Go with a side of AmRep territory. This EP has two bass-leveling songs, "Jöns" and "Serpentine," that play tug of war in your throat then slowly snake their way down to vibrate through the ribcage. Despair and sickness echo throughout both sides of the burly sea of doom laid out here. It growls and groans, and while that might not sound immediately aurally refreshing, it's truly awesome. (AL)
(Ventriculoperitoneal Sound)

DOA – "Let's Wreck The Party" CD

Sudden Death has reissued this early LP from these tireless British Columbians. I never was too into DOA; their best record after 1981 was the one they did with Jello Biafra—not that that stopped them from cranking 'em out. This shit in particular is largely an embarrassment. These could be songs from '80s B-movie soundtracks. The lyrics are impassioned and reasonable, but the music is aiming for broader accessibility, reminding me off all the shitty used records I bought—NECROS, SEVEN SECONDS, GBH, CIRCLE JERKS, EXPLOITED—not realizing the bands had totally turned to shit by the time they were putting out mid/late-'80s LPs. This does have one of their better songs, "Race Riot," which kills on the Peel Session but is merely the best of a bad lot here. I wonder if they kept the keyboard player off stage like DIO did. Here's your warning to avoid this puke. (JM)
(Sudden Death)

DOCTOR SCIENTIST – "Prehistoric Times" CD

Punk rock techno. Fast and harsh, but with that unmistakable electronic sound. If this had some pretty-boy singing sweetly over these beats I wouldn't be able to stand it. But I am betting these guys are as ugly as they sound. The vocals are mean and nasty. That makes the bleeps and beeps less annoying. Slightly. (CK)
(FDH)

DOVE – "Thank You for Patience" LP

A nice, ultra-limited 300-piece reissue of this Florida band's 2004 CD-only release, with two different color versions of a numbered, silk-screened over-sleeve plus standard LP cover, colored vinyl with multiple gig flyers, a T-REX parody sticker, a patch and lyric insert. Already sold out before I wrote that last sentence. Those wise enough to pre-order this post-CAVITY/FLOOR project will find—if they care to decrease the potential future eBay resale value—a thundering dose of doom metal with a dynamism that alternates between sludge pound and charging rock crunch, with vocals similar to Phillip from KYLESA in their canned wail across deep-end destructiveness. Killer record, and hope there's a more readily available edition as a follow-up. (KS)
(Financial Ruin)

DOWN IN AGONY – "El Sueno De Vernos Caer" LP

The TRAGEDY influence here is rather pronounced, though the bird is on the giant color poster, not the cover, and one singer is more tortured, less rageful. They temper this with sludgey metallic crust, which is helped by the great production—totally tough and loud. The eight songs on this LP don't drag on or bore me, the way the SILENCE material does, so I gotta say these Zaragozan kids did a good job. For some of y'all, this'd be a fine record. (JM)
(Agony / Mala Raza)

DUDE JAMS / RUMSPRINGER – split EP

In our midst here we have two pop-punk bands from the Southwest United States. Both playing fast, dirty and rather long pop songs—but they're well-written and fun to listen to. And both bands have a plethora of split 7"s already, and I'm sure will continue to do so in the future, as is the style of the time in the DIY pop-punk community. Who is to blame for all these split EPs? Is SPAZZ to blame? Did they make it popular? Or did someone blaze the trail before them? I'm sure this would make a good thesis paper for any budding punk historians out there. Anyway, getting to the music…DUDE JAMS is straight up DILLINGER-FOUR-worship, which is a complement. Feels like you're listening to *Vs God*. As for RUMSPRINGER, they have got more "ooooooooh"s in the backing vocals than a KRUPTED PEASANT FARMERZ song. They just ooze with poppiness. Looking at the lyrics, it seems both bands write in the man-vs-himself, *Hamlet* kind of style—dealing with pain and emotional turmoil, struggling with inner tensions. Pop-punk bands just don't write songs about "fucking shit up" anymore, I guess. In short, this record is sure to warm the hearts of landlocked SCREECHING WEASEL fans and Gainesville types around the world. And as brief note, without casting judgment, I would suggest in the future it would be rad to list band/label contact information in a non-MySpace format. MySpace is not punk. (FS)
(Muy Autentico)

EAST BAY GREASE – "Just Head" EP

Here's the thing: if you are going to do a stone-cold classic as a cover, it had better fucking rip. "Just Head' is an all time fave by the NERVOUS EATERS, but EAST BAY GREASE ruins it. Pedestrian… slowwwwww…sucks. (TB)
(Classic Bar Music)

EAST BAY GREASE – "Just Head" EP

Wake up—hot sweat (smells), unzip, unbottom, check—still there. Throw off the ratty, holey, woolly blanket, turn on your side. Put on a record, it's EAST BAY GREASE, pick up your cell phone, call somebody—they pick up, you hang up, because while the ring-ring-pause-silence-"hello?" happens, the needle finally locks into the groove and you hear a heavy-breath sex-rock (slow sex) version of the NERV EATS' klassik kut "Just Head," which Tim Brooks reckons is godawf but I demand to differ. B-side is no slouches either; there's another cover (just like a real actual *old* record) of forget-what-old-song and then an original that stands up to the other two. Jason Morgan of the elusive "Red Stars." Buy this record or don't, what do I care? But you might as well. (BB)
(Classic Bar Music)

EL BANDA – "Skutki Uboczne" 2xLP

This record is incredible! From beginning to end it's solid; one of the few double-LPs leaving you wanting more! It's dark and gritty lady-fronted hardcore from Poland, with some mid-tempo and melodic stuff. There's some harmonizing vocals and some songs with a horn viola instrumentation (very

tastefully done, though). But for the most part, this album is a rager; crushing, gloomy and fucking epic. To compare them directly to anyone would be difficult, because their music twists and turns around so many styles. At times they sound like a cross between MASSHYSTERI and OBSERVERS. Other times they sound like BEYOND PINK crossed with NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS. But out of all of that, they create something original, catchy and totally brutal. Not to mention the artwork looks fucking cool and their insert has the lyrics both in Polish and translated to English. One of the best albums of the month! Highly recommended! (FS)
(Pasazer)

THE ENDTABLES – 12"/CD

Aboutfuckingtime! I've wondered why the ENDTABLES never found themselves reissued or run through the bootleg mill. Drag City picked 'em up, continuing their run of quality reissues (JT IV, DEATH) with a collection of ENDTABLES material. You might know the band as the lone *KBD* representatives from the Bluegrass State. "Process of Elimination" made an appearance on *Bloodstains Across the Midwest* (even though some might quibble about Kentucky being part of the Midwest) and "Circumcision" on *Killed By Death* #10. This release includes the entirety of their first four-song 7" and the *White Glove Test* 7" that was released in 1991—and if you get the CD, you're treated to an unedited version of "Process," six live songs and some video clips as well. With the "what you're gettin' for your money" out of the way, let me say that there is no band—then or now—who sounds like the ENDTABLES. Sharp guitars and brilliantly, choppy, deadpan, dispassionate singing by Steve Rigot, looking sorta like Kentucky's answer to Gary Floyd (DICKS). Chances are you've probably heard ENDTABES stuff on comps or floating around the Internet Machine. Do yourself a favor and grab this album. Killer, top to bottom. (IS)
(Drag City)

ESKORBUTO – "Maldito País: Primero Época 1982-84" 2xCD

Can you imagine Spain in the 1970's? The political uncertainty? The social unrest? The ethnic divisions? The violence? Holy smokes. For three young guys grappling with these very real issues, along with their developing resentment for aspects of the Basque independence movement from which they sprang, punk offered an outlet for them to speak directly on the *policía*, *hipócritas*, and *terroristas*. This collection of 49 songs on two discs is all of ESKORBUTO's recorded material up until the release of their legendary LPs. Full of excitement, energy and spontaneity, these songs are pulled from the original tapes of not only their first studio session, but clear and well-recorded live tracks and rehearsals in addition to their first demo (which is incredible!). There is some tape interference at times, obvious damage from close to 30 years of storage, as well a censored version of a track where there are quick *bleeps* to distort the lyrics. Very strange, but all in all these minor issues do not take away from the incredible artifact and documentation of the early days of Spain's most important punk band. (RM)
(Munster)

EVERYTHING SUCKS – "The Taxes In Texas" LP

Is this a new FOUR HUNDRED YEARS record? I wanna give it a chance 'cause it seems quite righteous in its reasoning, but I just can't get into it. It's of that mid/late-'90s math-y and emotional family of bands like the aforementioned FOUR HUNDRED YEARS, 1.6 BAND, and TORCHES TO ROME and that shit. I liked some of those bands at the time and still do like some of them, but… (JU)
(Just a Audial / Dead Broke)

FELL TO LOW – "You're Such a Good Champion" 10"

This new bands hails from Santa Barbara, but the water from San Diego must flow in that direction 'cause this rockin' 10" slab feels strongly influenced by the likes of DRIVE LIKE JEHU and some of the heavier '90s bands like END OF THE LINE. It's so good to hear bands like this progressing out and playing some stoned-out hardcore jams without falling into the dark side of metal or bar rock or whatever. FELL TO LOW is hardcore punk and beyond, and though reminiscent of a past era, it sounds fresher and more welcome right now than anything I've heard in a while. More, please. (BG)
(Dog Family)

FICTION REFORM – "Revelation in the Palms of the Weak" CD

From the greater LA area, this female-fronted band sounds like the DISTILLERS, or BAD RELIGION with Courtney Love singing. I'll take the GOOPS over this any day. Still not bad, as it's good to hear a raspy female vocalist in a melodic punk vein. (RL)
(Basement)

FLATLINERS – "Cavalcade" CD

Energetic pop-punk that reminds me of OFF WITH THEIR HEADS and, when they mix it up, AGAINST ME. Pretty solid and certainly the best I've heard from these guys. If I had heard this a couple of weeks ago I wouldn't have skipped their recent local show. Damn, a good release from the label the hardcore kids love to hate. See them on the Warped Tour and I'm not being sarcastic. (RL)
(Fat Wreck)

THE FLYSWATTERS – "Brain Dead" CD

This is a tasty little gem from a band that I would peg as being from SoCal… and with the help of MySpace I find that I am partially correct! They are listed as "straight outta parts of South Jersey, SoCal and one member up in Philly," but to me they are all SoCal with a sound and style reminiscent of the PEGS or STITCHES. Just check out the title track at the end of this eight-song CD called "Brain Dead" and then listen to "Cars of Today" by the STITCHES… I rest my case. (ML)
(self-released)

FOLDED SHIRT – "15 Year Old Kids" EP

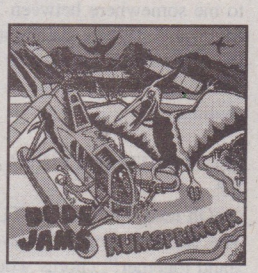
Four tunes from a new project by one of the HOMOSTUPIDS. The music is very clean, simple and also catchy. The vocals are just whiney enough to make this record unpleasant to listen to—they are not terrible but the music isn't interesting enough to make up for the whiney inflection leaving this record with a solid "so-so" grading. (MU)
(Fashionable Idiots)

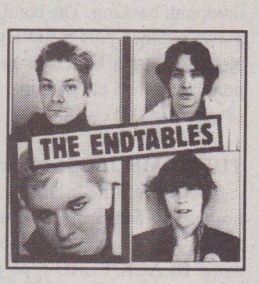
FRESH & ONLYS – "Witchy Woman" 45

Wow, I was expecting a cruel joke out of this limited one-sided single. Turns out "Witchy Woman" is a FRESH & ONLYS original, and not the ironic EAGLES cover I was dreading. Not sure what kind of music the kids are calling this these days, so I will call it Psychedelic Armory Rock. You know, the kind of infectious, bass-heavy '60s organ-driven Head Music you can still remember hearing the local longhairs play some Friday night in the youth center gymnasium after smoking a bowl in your best friend's girlfriend's parents' car. Numbered out of 400 copies. (GB)
(Hell Yes)

GET RAD – "I Can Always Live" LP

These youths sure know what they're doing. Fast, catchy hardcore; full and sick production; each song flying in on the heels of the last one; gang choruses… My biggest complaint is that it's a little *too* well done, like they honed their craft too finely, polished it then scuffed the polish. Eight songs would've been better than the sixteen provided. You oughta hear this 'cause I'm being pretty picky, I'm sure many kids are hell of stoked on this band and I can see why. If I heard one of these songs, I'd be pumped, but I'll pass on a whole LP. (JM)
(Gilead Media / Hyperrealist)





GRUEL – 2xLP

A beautiful double-LP release; four tracks, one on each side of a 12". "I" has a slow, chugging metal sound and some dark ambient noise moments. The track speeds up some towards the end and has a slight stoner rock vibe. "II" is slow, heavy and pained, ending with ambient sounds. "III" is faster at times but still has its roots in doom with touches of black metal. There are also some dark ambient noise moments that seem to include field recordings from caves in France. "IV" is extremely slow doom metal that is often very minimal. This track reminds me a bit of KHANATE. The tracks ebb and flow from quiet to loud and back again. If you want some ugly, dark doom, this is worth a listen. (MH)
(Feast of Tentacles)

THE HADITUPTOHERES – "Wild City Honest Dancing" LP

Hell yeah—after a few uh, not so awesome records this month, here's a keeper. Hailing from the Detroit area, these guys play some nice, scuzzy-sounding rock. The rudimentary, straightforward approach to the songwriting totally works for this style that sounds to me somewhere between TURBONEGRO and the MC5, and maybe even a hint of *Wimpy*-era QUEERS. Give this one a listen—it's totally worth your time. (BD)
(Salinas)

HARRINGTON SAINTS / VOLXSTURM – split EP

Oh man, this VOLXSTURM band is just so bad. The chanted chorus "Forever for eternity / We will stand together!" chorus would be sad if it wasn't so laughable. I saw the HARRINGTON SAINTS this past weekend at a Bruce Roehrs memorial show, which is fitting cause they play Oi/streetpunk straight out of one of his columns. Nothing special, but they're simple and catchy. (JH)
(Contra / Longshot)

HLM GANG – "Local Sessions 1981-1982" CD

Not too up on Swiss punk other than Dieter Meier's NASAL BOYS (whose "Hot Love" is an all-time fave). This shit is way less frantic and *waaaay* more lo-fi. Sounds like practice recordings. Super raw DIY shit-punk, which for the time is totally outta control... weirdo new wavey vocals with an erratic thudpunk backing. The band is one part proto-anarcho punk, another part KBD/Hyped 2 Death weirdness. No info, just a bunch of rad photos. Fans of Swiss punk are gonna eat this up... Good shit. (TB)
(Swiss Punk)

THE HOMICIDES – "Black Leather Redneck" EP

Swearing like a sailor with piles and paying homage to Satan like he was the good lord himself. Seven tracks on nice, heavy 12" vinyl rocking some BLACK FLAG-type punk whilst mixing it up with some good ol' Southern-fried rock. Maybe a pre-Rollins whacked in the head with a helping of LIMECELL and ANTISEEN. It certainly is what it is and I'm not knocking it. (SD)
(Vertex)

HOMOSTUPIDS – "Night Deacon" EP

I don't know of any current bands doing anything as retarded, blown-out and ridiculous as FREESTONE's "Bummer Bitch" single or some of the other KBD classics, but the HOMOSTUPIDS come pretty close and I love it. A couple faster songs, a weird instrumental with what I believe is a harp, and not one but *two* songs about sucking the bus driver's cock—we've got a winner here, folks! (JH)
(Fashionable Idiots)

HOOKERS – "Horror Rises from the Tombs/The Mugger"

I haven't heard shit from Kentucky's HOOKERS in years, and they are exactly like I remember them. *Horror Rises from the Tombs* is a fukkn burner that would make Confederacy of Scum aficionados grin from ear to ear. Dirty, snarling, whiskey-drenched punk rock 'n' roll at its finest with just a sprinkle of MISFITS in the vibe department. "The Mugger" is a cover of a little-known NWOBHM gem from SHOCK TREATMENT' not as raging as the HOOKERS track, but a killer jam nonetheless. They say it's been eight years since the last release—good to have them back. (WN)
(Red Tornado)

HOT FLOWERS – "Camellia" CD

Fucked-up left-field punk, like some of the more acerbic French new wave shit mixed with PiL and stuff like BOSS HOG and JOHN SPENCER. Two-piece from France with a guitar sound so thin it could cut paper. There's a rolling blues feel underlying the sparse electricity of the band. It's a tough listen but the band has a hypnosis that I am digging. Pretty blindsided by this, but also pretty blown away. Well worth checking of you want yer head melting. (TB)
(self-released)

IAN & THE AZTECS – "Live From the Troy School of Beauty Culture" 10"

Engagingly ragged versions of standards ("Cinderella," "Stepping Stone"), some less-covered chestnuts (the DC5's "Anyway You Want It," HUEY LEWIS's [not the NEWS H. LEWIS, goober] "Don't You Know Yokomo") and a garage-ified workout of "Suspicious Minds," which may be too corny a song to pull off regardless of how far one's tongue might be in one's cheek. (DD)
(Carlton)

ICE NINE – "Nobody's Son" EP

Background: ICE NINE started in the early 90s in Indianapolis and had a run of five or six years before fizzling when the bassist moved to San Francisco. Members went on to form TIME IN MALTA, BURN IT DOWN and others. ICE NINE un-fizzled last year to play a fest in Indianapolis, and that reunion of sorts led to this record. Music: Discordant, angry songs that I dare say can only be created by punks with a couple of decades of levity and perspective. This is hardcore, to speak in generalities, but ICE NINE is coming at this from so many different angles that "SPDGAF" is presented more like dissonant noise while "I Hate" is a progression from (and tremendous improvement on) modern "hardcore" bands that have traded in the anger for slick moves and guitar tones. This is an absolutely furious record, as if the years spent involved in DIY punk have served to make them *more* bitter, but more determined at the same time. Scoth's drums are as crushing as ever, and now benefit (at last) from an excellent low-end heavy recording. The guitars are anxious and forceful...not confident so much as deliberate, and a BORN AGAINST comparison would not be out of line. The lyrics and their delivery are as crucial as the music is punishing, and are as full of second thoughts as they are insight: "I lived life to die and gave a fuck about you / I threw beers at the kids and screamed like I knew / These were my politics" and "All I ever wanted was to not get shit thrown at me from cars / Just to walk with my friends without getting in fights / Just to finish school / Just to fucking go out at night / It's all dead / It's all safe." ICE NINE has done a lot more than just pick up where they left off years ago; they've taken the rage of youth and combined it with the frustration of adulthood and growing older...the rage is still there but things become more internalized, and the result on this EP is jaw-dropping. I understand there is an LP in the works...stoked. (WN)
(Prank Records)

ILEGAL – "Error de Orden" EP

Ferocious, raw and unhinged, this thing is so urgent yet sounding genuinely like some lost '80s Italian HC recording (think NEGAZIONE or CCM), it blows my mind that this a current band from Montreal (three-fourths of the band illegally living there, hence the name). A serious WRETCHED vibe happening without sounding aped or contrived, this thing is just oozing with personality, flavor and is just a throbbing wall of noise and power. The drumming is a super tight yet sounding super loose whirlwind as if they were being played in a washing machine or dryer; the vocals have this talking/yelling delivery with such conviction as if every word was his last. The guitar and bass are so driving and pulsating, on songs like "Conquistados" there is this mosh part and it makes you wanna just destroy; when the siren stops in the song "Ilegal" you just want to be a wrecking ball and smash it all to pieces. Fuck—the last song "Krisis de Conciencia" kicked in right now and I'm having a hard time refraining from throwing the monitor through the window. An excellent first release making me very anxious to hear further records from this band. Tutti pazzi indeed. (RR)
(Lengua Armada)

IMPERIAL CAN – "Hey Fuckers" CD

This is Chris Clavin's latest band from that new hotspot, Cairo, IL. If you are familiar with the output of OPERATION CLIFF CLAVIN and GHOST MICE, you will be instantly familiar with the sound of IMPERIAL CAN. Energetic, positive pop-punk with clearly enunciated vocals. I've never been a true fan of this style, but I agree with the sentiments: not giving up on punk, keeping shit DIY, believing that punk can change the world and fighting back the creeping hand of monoculture. It's the parts about four-square and Christmas that make me uneasy. Overall, I think this is a good release and it will probably change some young kid's life in some town I've never heard of. I really would've been happier without that DEAD MOON cover though. Do not taint their legacy. (GH)
(Plan-It-X)

INSERVIBLESS – "Cultura Pendeja" EP

Wow!! This band is from Mexico and torture my gentle ears with this lo-fi disaster of a record which I am totally into. I got their demos a bit ago and this sounds as chaotic as the tapes did. Pretty out of control punk with touches of hardcore and the vocalist sounds like he is a block away in a 400 hundred person capacity hall with only twenty people watching. Yeah, so be part of the twenty and get this record. (MS)
(HBSP-2X)

INSTINCT OF SURVIVAL – "North of Nowhere..." LP

I was previously familiar with German stenchcore

purveyors INSTINCT OF SURVIVAL from a tape I picked up at a show not too long ago. At the time I was pretty impressed with their metallic crust. After listening to this LP I feel comfortable ranking them among the top few bands playing this style in the world today. This is just fucking crushing, unrelenting, heavy music. The obvious influences are here, from DEVIATED INSTINCT to AXEGRINDER to SKAVEN, along with a healthy dose of primitive death metal via the first BOLT THROWER LP and WINTER. Looking at the cover I see that the half-skeletal, beer-clutching, dreadlocked crust punk pictured is in fact wearing a DEVIATED INSTINCT shirt and sporting a WINTER patch, so I feel pretty safe in my previous statement. Lyrically this deals with many of the expected themes of war, hate, ecological destruction, depression and the death of idealism in a soul-crushing world. The writing is fantastic, despite the use of the phrase "pathetic sausageness." I'm giving them the benefit of the doubt and assuming that sounds better in German. Seriously, though, buy this LP, it's a goddamned killer.
(World Funeral)

IVAN REBROFF'S ARMPITS – "Play It the Same" CD

I knew this time was coming…mainstream alternative music is going to absorb every good aspect of underground hardcore, and bands like this are going to be their stepping stones. Apocalyptic TRAGEDY-style melodic crust with driving drums and repetitive guitar melodies combine with tuneful and harmonized vocals to create something that I've not heard before…which I am sure was their goal. A few tracks in, clean meandering guitars take over and turn the vibe in an indie direction and then comes a riff worthy of RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE, both in construction and delivery. There's one grind/sludge song that is pretty killer, but on the whole the vocals completely kill this for me; it's like REFUSED without any of the fire, or AFI without any of the goth. The band is just guitar and drums, but there are so many guitar tracks that you never notice the absence of a bass at all. Look out kids, tech-emo-metal-core can only last so long, and this is what's coming next. (WN)
(Vegas)

JAWBREAKER – "Unfun" LP

I'm guessing most people who'd care are already familiar with JAWBREAKER, so at most this review will serve notice that *Unfun*, their first album, is back in print on vinyl for the first time in almost 20 years, reissued on drummer Adam Pfahler's Blackball Records imprint. While I like a couple tracks off *Bivouac* and *24-Hour Revenge Therapy*, I think JAWBREAKER's early stuff is the best (check out the demo tracks on the *Etc*. collection!). Here, the band drew from the poppy bounce of the DESCENDENTS and the proto-emo of the late-'80s DC scene and, incorporating Blake Schwarzenbach's unique delivery and clever wordplay, made their own sound that in turn has influenced countless others. I think *Unfun* kinda loses steam on the B-side, but it's a solid LP overall and worth it for songs like "Want" and "Incomplete." The CD version of this reissue includes the tracks from their debut *Whack & Blight* EP. (CS)
(Blackball)

JESUSCENTRIC – 12"

First off, I can't believe that it took three record labels to put out something that looks so terrible. Wrapped within said atrocious artwork is a one-sided 12" of meandering slow/quiet-into-slow/loud screaming emo-core…meandring being the key word. Like an uninspired version of ONE EYED GOD PROHECY or a DRIFT/GODSPEED YOU BLACK EMPEROR hybrid. (JU)
(Tor Johnson / Gatehouse / All About)

JESUS CROST – "010" CD

Wonderfully crazy Rotterdam grindcore. This CD is relentless! I put it on random and just let the fast, short songs rip. This two-person Dutch band has been around for nearly 15 years and rips through 23 blistering tracks in 15 minutes. The tracks are fast, tight, spastic stop 'n' go that never seem to let up. Touches of Swedish grind, fastcore and powerviolence. The only minus is the pig-squeal vocals on one of the tracks. Great stuff. (MH)
(Bones Brigade)

JUHYO / PIG HEART TRANSPLANT – split EP

One song here from PIG HEART TRANSPLANT, who are steadily amassing an arsenal of devastating releases. "Your New Life" is a crushing one-note dirge that owes volumes to the SWANS-style noise damage approach to music…the track descends into subdued noise after the pummeling is complete. Awesome shit. JUHYO on its own would likely have been passed over by the Punk Police here at MRR HQ, mostly 'cause the shit ain't punk, but "A Gift of Tears" is a killer ambient noise track that fades into calming waves of drone. Great shit here, though you might need to leave your studded jacket at home. (WN)
(Hear More)

KEROSIN / MEAN IDOLS – split CD

This 13-track split album pairs Finland's MEAN IDOLS with Russia's KEROSIN. Though both can name SOCIAL DISTORTION as a major influence, the former employs a rockabilly sound on some of their tracks—reverbed guitar and vocals, blues song structures, etc.—and even feature (sparingly) banjo and accordion. KEROSIN has much more of a rockin' punk'n'roll attack with a pretty heavy, crunchy guitar sound, kinda gritty vocals and, on the tune "Kiss and Kill," a "woah oh" part very reminiscent of SOCIAL D's "Telling Them." Production values for both bands are pretty high; I wouldn't say *too* slick, though a little more dirt would've given this CD some much-needed spark… Overall, it's pretty lighthearted and by-the-numbers. (CS)
(Rumble Fish)

KIELTOLAKI – "Massahypnoosi" LP

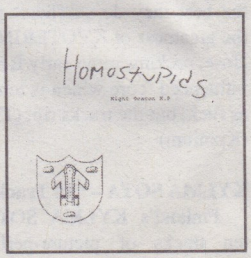
To me, KIELTOLAKI represents a prime example of hardcore/punk "regional development" in 2010. *Massahypnoosi* is a perfect modern hardcore record that in no way sounds retro, but the foundation laid by early KAAOS and their Finn-core ilk is unmistakable. Whether that is KIELTOLAKI's intention or not, is of no matter 'cause this shit fully stands on its own as a mighty hardcore record. A thrashing, bashing, howling storm that only draws back the pace to hit even harder in the ebbs. My only (minor) complaint is that I wish the bass was louder in the mix because its tone is awesome and really has a lot to do with these songs' powerful impact. The bottom line is that this 12" is a thundering show of force and a perfect follow up to two great 7"s. (JU)
(Feral Ward)

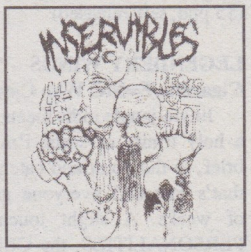
GG KING – "Babbling Voices/Insomnia"

I hate to admit it; I don't like the name GG KING. So right off, I am biased against this record. Why don't I? I have no idea. It's illogical. The name brings to my mind 1.) DEE DEE KING, DEE DEE RAMONE's rap alter-ego, 2.) GG ALLIN and 3.) "The King" as in ELVIS PRESLEY. All mixed up, it conjures up this really lame image for me. Sorry, GG KING, if it is your real name. I should be more opened-minded. As for the less superficial aspects of this record, uhhh (shoulder shrug). The vocals are bratty and lethargic. The music sounds like some second-rate JAY REATARD composition. The B-side is a bit peppier than the A-side. The vocals sound less annoying when they are sped up. (CK)
(Local Cross)

KVOTERINGEN – "Samhallets Forradare" LP

This Swedish outfit has evolved somewhat beyond their roots in TOTALITÄR with their second LP, which combines thundering HC with rough-hewn guitar riffs that embrace the D-beat sound. It's a style that can get tiring quickly, but there's a menacing edge of distortion (even a touch of crust in two tracks) that lends immediacy to this set of tunes. No real standout tracks, per se, but the short, tight "En Dares Deslut" captures their aggressive sound





at its most concentrated. Strong release. (SS)
(Feral Ward)

KVOTERINGEN / NITAD – "Fuck Your Scene, Kid: Vol. 3" split EP

Split EP featuring two of Sweden's finest... KVOTERINGEN and NITAD. The new KVOTERINGEN LP has spent a lot of time on the table recently—full-force D-beat with the drummer of TOTALITÄR on guitar. The tracks on here slow things down a hair, adding a raw MOTÖRHEAD vibe. One of the best bands out there. NITAD's tracks are probably the best they do—difficult playing second fiddle to the greatness of KVOTERINGEN but they run pretty close, rocking some early REGULATIONS-style US-influenced 'core which is tough as shit. Cover is ugly as fuck, but the tracks rip. (TB)
(Kranium)

KYLMA SOTA – "10 Tracks" LP

Finland's KYLMA SOTA ("Cold War") crank ten tracks of picture-perfect, color-between-the-lines '80s-styled Finnish hardcore à la RIISTETYT/KAAOS, but then masterfully blur the entire picture by drenching it in an constant, overwhelming DISCLOSE/SWANKYS-style mega-level-guitar-distortion buzz and attack. Remarkably well done and consistent; the impact of this style really compounds over repetitive listens and shines on the 12" format where each track builds on the last. The drums rumble and then gallop to full D-beat, the guitars squeal, vocals howl. There's no lyric sheet, but with titles like "Media-Paaska" ("Media Shit") the diehard fans of this style have picked up enough Finnish curse words over 30-plus years of Finn punk records to get the point. Includes a cover of the Japanese band EVANCE. *Killer!* (KS)
(Feral Ward)

LA CORDE – "Back in Salem/Urban Burqa"

Glad to see this San Francisco band make it to vinyl. LA CORDE dices with that dark, gothic-tinged punk that evokes rainy days, black raincoats and long bangs. Chiming, reverb-soaked guitars and driving rhythms are reminiscent of TSOL or BAUHAUS while the vocal delivery would have me reaching for my SISTERS OF MERCY records if I actually had any. If you've enjoyed the ESTRANGED's recent output, or like your punk on the gloomy, pessimistic side, this will not disappoint. (AM)
($5 ppd, self-released)

LEGENDERY WINGS – "Did You Just Eat That Cigarette/E=MC Who Cares"

Jingle-jangle indie meets power-pop meets garage, a holy trinity of sorts. I'm loving this record—it's brief, to-the-point and catchy as that god-awful cold that's knocked everyone sideward the last couple of weeks. A slight touch of the TELEVISION PERSONALITIES, the CLEAN, the AIRFIX KITS and the NEWTOWN NEUROTICS. What more can a man say? Quality. (SD)
(Tic Tac Totally)

THE LIMIT – "Smash It!" EP

Any 7" with eleven tracks on it is practically a guarantee that you're in for a fast and furious hardcore treat, and this is no exception. I was sort of expecting some early-'80s Italian hardcore revival since these dudes are from Palermo, but the tunes come off more like a blend between KILL YOUR IDOLS and some of the better Bridge Nine bands like NO WARNING and STRIKING DISTANCE. This is normally not the type of hardcore that captivates me, but the strong lyrics that tear apart religion and nationalism, coupled with some killer guitar work, really makes the band stand out. (BG)
(Hanged Man)

THE LIONS RAMPANT – "It's Fun to Do Bad Things" CD

You probably only need one image to picture what the music sounds like on this CD. Fortunately, it is on the back cover. Three shirtless guys standing on the roof of one of those '70s-style custom vans while fireworks go off in the background. If that doesn't do it for you, I'll spell it out. The music is Southern-tinged hard rock. One song has "cocaine" in the title and another has "gin" in its title. Yawn. (CK)
(Deep Elm)

LIPSTICK VIBRATORS – "Drag Me to Hell" EP

Well, one thing is for sure—the French know how to play good fucking garage/punk rock'n'roll! LIPSTICK VIBRATORS are another band of the many, many good R'n'R bands to come from Spain and France in particular for some reason!?! With a line-up comprised of veteran rockers from previous bands such as DEFENESTRORS, SPERMICIDE and more, these guys (and gal) crank out high-energy rock'n'roll comparable to the STOOGES, DEVIL DOGS or NEW BOMB TURKS to name a few. (ML)
(Rockin' Dogs)

LITTLE LUNGS – "Living Hell" EP

The guitars are a little too slow and busy (please try to understand what I'm saying) for my tastes, getting into the post-math emo guitar world of RAINER MARIA. The vox melodies stick with this aesthetic and also spread into SLEATER KINNEY territory. Everything is really tuned and sincere and carefully written, and the members of LITTLE LUNGS are certainly talented, which is commendable. But it's missing an amount of attitude that would round out the recording more. They describe themselves as "indi-punk" and this is definitely not a lie—indie comes before punk on this EP. (HD)
(Salinas)

LIVSTID / PASSIV DODSHIALP – split EP

LIVSTID plays modern crust. They use a D-beat, but I wouldn't consider them a true D-beat band since there is a lot of melody in the mix, and plenty of slow, dramatic parts. They apparently also identify as grind, but I don't hear that in the least; it's nowhere near fast enough. PASSIV DODSHIALP plays metallic, melodic crust/hardcore in the modern vein. Both bands use their native language in the lyrics, so unless you read Swedish, your guess on the content is as good as mine. Overall this is a solid but not outstanding addition to the long catalog of Swedish crust. If that's your bag then you should by all means pick this up. (VX)
(Halvfabrikat / Anarkopunx)

LYCKA TILL – CD

Ska-influenced folk-punk from Sweden. Not kidding. What a weird world. It's something totally new, and something you would totally expect from Plan-It-X Records. Upbeat, folky tunes that feel like rays of sunshine, or being hit over the head by the world's most tiny hammer (I guess it depends on your mood). Not really my jam; feels kind of like LA PLEBE-lite. But I'm very confident that the folks in the train-hoping/campfire community will eat this up. It's delivered well and the band is obviously very talented. Tunes are pretty catchy...I will begrudgingly admit, this isn't that annoying. (FS)
(Plan-It-X)

MANIPULATION – "Violence" EP

Great debut EP from this new Chicago band—dark, ripping HC with more than a passing resemblance to early DEATHREAT. Tight and driving with a heavy two-guitar attack; simple but cool artwork. No bullshit, to the point (like this review). Features members of CHRONIC SEIZURE, PEDESTRIANS, SIN ORDEN, and more. Get it. (CS)
(Fashionable Idiots)

THE MANIX – "Van Activities" EP

This four-song EP is a solid release from this Minnesotan punk band. The songs are all tight and up-tempo with lots of melodic guitar leads and hooks, and there are heaps of gang-vocals throughout. Although not what I would typically listen to, this is really good stuff and I would describe them as slightly poppy at times although more aggressive overall with a late-'90s punk sound—reminds me of bands like STREET BRATS or a little bit like OFF WITH THEIR HEADS at times. (ML)
(Whoa Oh)

MARBLE! – CD

This is not punk and the review should probably not be published. But if you must know what this album is all about, I'll tell you. Music that sounds like late-era DONNAS, with the most moronic lyrics. They sing about dying hair and getting their nails done to look good for the boys. There is a song about making the other girls jealous, 'cause they look so good. The kicker is there isn't a shread of satire in the entire fucking album. They actually think its important to write songs about make-up and how they are better than other people. (FS)
(Massprodktion)

MARCHING ORDERS – "Days Gone By" LP

Here's a brand spanking new release from Melbourne-based MARCHING ORDERS, keeping the old school Aussie skinhead spirit alive in 2010! Beautiful thick gatefold cover and (limited?) clear blue vinyl sports my favorite No Future Records font à la RED ALERT, deftly melding the old with the new, including bonus archival '70s photos and "A Brief History of Australian 'Skins & Sharpies'" story. If you haven't already guessed, this is anthemic Oi/street-punk of the highest order; complete with ROSE TATTOO cover. I'm sure Roehrs would be shitting himself over this if he was still with us. (GB)
(Longshot Music / Contra)

MARVELOUS DARLINGS – "Teenage Targets/Lagoons"

Damn! How fucking good can this band be?? I absolutely loved their debut release *I Don't Wanna Go to the Party* from 2007 but I had felt let down a bit by their subsequent releases for some reason... but this new single has easily matched that debut and possibly surpassed it. This band has brought back the "power" and the "pop" to the power-pop genre! They play with energy and excitement while maintaining incredible hooks and pop sensibilities. Growing up in Canada I listened to a lot of Canadian punk bands in the '80s and '90s, and to me these guys (being from Toronto) have tapped into that sound from my

youth—with similarities to the ASEXUALS or the NILS. I would also be so bold to say that some comparisons can be made to the REPLACEMENTS and *older* SOUL ASYLUM as well… (ML)
(Plastic Idol)

MCRACKINS – "It Ain't Over Easy" CD

These guys never seem to change, and it works for them. Another full-length from this Canadian power-pop/pop-punk trio. Well produced and catchy, this will not disappoint the popsters. Now if they'd only tour the States. (RL)
(Wolverine)

MDC – "Hey Cop, If I Had a Face Like Yours..." CD

Also known as *Millions of Dead Cops 2* and touted at the time as an attempt to "go back to the roots of MDC, hence the full-on punk/hardcore sound," this is a German CD reissue of the fifth MDC LP originally released by R-Radical Records in 1991. It features Dave Dictor and Al Schwitz from the original line-up plus Bill Collins from INTENSIFIED CHAOS, FANG and SPECIAL FORCES on guitar and Matt Freeman from OPERATION IVY and later RANCID on bass. It's a curious record to re-release, especially with its original, god-awful cover of a dog's ass with a cop hat, which could only be appreciated if the cloud of pot smoke it must've been conceived under wafted out of the record when you opened it. The reissue has a fuller and crisper mastering than the original vinyl pressing, and on this release MDC did really limit the experimentation that marked their later records—there's catchy sing-along tracks ("Beat Somebody Up," "Moneypile"), hard rock ("Black Christmas"), as well as plenty of fast thrash songs, (including the brutal "Mark of the Farmer") and one weird peace punk-y rant ("I Do Not Wish"), which possibly makes it a consistently stronger release than the preceding *Metal Devil Cokes*. It also lacks any of the calypso-jam/disco/folk faux pas of *Smoke Signals* or *Millions of Damn Christians*, but with that, also lacks some of the lingering bite and extreme intensity of this band's initial impact that was evident on those records. There's still a lot of strength in the vocals and unique songwriting, lyrics attacking Nazis, violence, violence against women, cops, war, and George Bush (Senior). Dating from a unique point in time and a transition in the US and local San Francisco scene, some of the music is actually stronger—like a lot of late-'80s and early-'90s punk—than the recording quality limitations allowed it to be, and it's curious that the melodic undercurrents in some tracks aren't really that different from what showed up in RANCID three or four years later. MDC and their continued evolution to me always represented the freaky, post-hippie, queer, progressive fringe and radical elements that made San Francisco a great place to be, and 20 years later all of that is still an indelible part of the landscape of the Bay Area, albeit one increasingly mangled by gentrification and development. Revisiting MDC unfurling their radical freak flag makes this a cool time capsule and underlines the fact that long after a point in time where the majority of the initial US hardcore scene had broken up, gone metal or college rock, sold out and/or moved on, MDC continued (and continues) to release records with political lyrics and stay down with both ideals and the local scene, and with that it becomes less of a question mark why this was re-released, and more a review of another chapter in a great band's legacy. (KS)
(Twisted Chords)

MDC – "Millions of Dead Cops/More Dead Cops" CD

There's a never a bad time to (re)visit the classics. Along with the DEAD KENNEDYS' *In God We Trust*, MDC championed and spotlighted both overtly political lyrical concerns and furious hardcore/thrash. Their first LP (released in '82) and the EP collection (from '81 thru '87) really is the pinnacle of the committed end of blistering, stop-on-a-dime thrash. Back in the day, this had the reviewers of magazines such as this one inventing a whole new lexicon to describe the genre—"shreds to dust" et al. Angry, outspoken, uncompromising speed freaks at the top of their game. Why is America so straight and me so bent, in-fucking-deed. (RK)
(Twisted Chords)

MEERCAZ – LP

It's too bad that everything on this LP is not as good as the song "Unlust," because that song rules! As far as the rest of this record goes, it relies pretty heavily on *Funhouse* by the STOOGES for inspiration. The thing is though, the STOOGES managed to be transcendental where MEERCAZ is just kinda…not like that. Fuzzed-out, reverb soaked rock'n'roll that goes on and on and on…noodlin' like it ain't no thing. If you like to take some pills and get blown the fuck out, this might be your jam. (GH)
(Tic Tac Totally)

MEMOIRS & LANDMINES / T.R.Y. – Split EP

Two new bands with widely different approaches to punk represent Redding, California, on this split EP, and both are commendable enough to warrant a few repeated listens already. I've been digging melodic punk lately, so the MEMOIRS & LANDMINES side of this record is a nice treat, with two moody songs that remind me of SAMIAM or some early No Idea Records type of stuff. I think much of the good sound is due to the fact that it's a moderately produced effort and on vinyl; if this stuff was overproduced and squeaky clean, it would probably sound too much like all the melodic pop-punk bands I couldn't stand in the '90s. So please stay raw, boys, stay raw. T.R.Y., on the other hand, satisfies the more hardcore leaning within me, with a sound capturing the straight edge youth crew comeback of the early '90s like BATTERY, mixed slightly with a dose of discordance that bands like MOHINDER perfected. Not a bad combination of influences, if you ask me. I'm interested to see where both of these bands go from here. (BG)
(Intervention)

MEMPHIS MORTICIAN – "1,000,000 Delinquents" CD

By-the-book rockabilly that's just too…well, by the book. I like my pompadours a bit more ruffled and my riffs a little less tame. (SD)
(Space Hearse)

THE MENZINGERS – "Chamberlain Waits" CD

They have the beards that seem to be *de rigueur* for the bands emerging from the sweaty basement shows, but like HOT WATER MUSIC and AGAINST ME! who came before, they've retained enough of a sense of melody, power and passion (that doesn't just devolve into a hoarse bellow) to gloriously smooth over the anger and the grit. A good working-class sensibility (and lives lived to date) adds a touch of rationality that means we can even forgive them the acoustic track. This is really good. But then again, it is on Red Scare, who apparently knows a quality act or two. (RK)
(Red Scare)

MIDWAY STILL – "Note to Self" CD

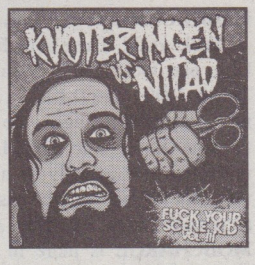
Wow, I guess you can say it's been a while. These UK'ers were around in the early '90s on the same label as LEATHERFACE. I was stoked to see this but in all honestly they have changed a bit. Although never a hardcore band by any means, this is pretty alt. rock along the ways of FOO FIGHTERS and more recent SAMIAM. But I guess I'll take what I can get, as this is decent for what it is. (RL)
(Boss Tuneage)

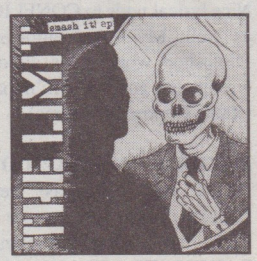
MIGHTY MIDGETS – "Raising Ruins for the Future" CD

Everything I associate with mall punk on one CD. (JH)
(5 Feet Under / Shattered Thought / Deadlamb)

THE MINDS – "Knifed" EP

Herky-jerky, pushing the energy to the max and still managing enough groove to fill a ballroom. Three tracks of '79-influenced punk with a rougher-'round-the-edges feel that gives this extra punk rock points. Almost like a TRANZMITORS without those well-pressed suits and tailored jackets. Fave record of the month. (SD)
(Plastic Idol)





MOBCHARGE – "Apocalyptic Horror" LP

Fuck yeah! There's nothing new or innovative here, and there really doesn't fucking need to be. This is 100% pure D-beat in all of its slightly sloppy, raw glory with a singer who sounds remarkably like the late Kawakami (DISCLOSE, of course). The recording may actually be a little too clean for my taste, but if you crank the bass and listen to it as loud as possible, it sounds *good*. As far as the style goes, MOBCHARGE is more in line with second-wave bands like DISGUST and DISASTER both in their lack of solos and the relative shortness of the songs. Nice lyrical nods to CONFLICT and SORE THROAT as well. My only complaint is the way obvious Photoshop work that's all over the layout. What's wrong with good ol' cut 'n' paste? (AU)
(Rabia Contra El Sistema)

MÖGEL – "1978-1983" CD

It's not quite as frenetic as KLEENEX/LILLIPUT—a little more grown-up and laid-back—but it's pretty fucking close. A less-playful RAINCOATS. Multiple female voices singing slightly different things at the same time sounding simultaneously desperate and bored; wandering drums; clean, simple guitar riffs with bass lines that amble along. If you like anything I referenced, it's definitely worthwhile to check out. (MM)
(Massproduktion)

THE MOON IS DOWN – "Excellent Adventure" CD

This band set the expectation-bar pretty high right off the bat by claiming this was "the most brutal folk album ever made." A lofty statement for sure. You guys actually think you're more brutal than FAIRPORT CONVENTIONS's *Liege & Lief*?!? But after listening to it...I don't know. This is pretty brutal. It's total gritty drunk-folk-punk madness. It's catchy and raw and thrashy (for a folk-punk album). It's like if SNUGGLE made a folk-punk album. It's music that just makes you want to slam that beer you're drinking extra quick, blackout and act like moron. I hate 99% of folk punk albums, but I like this a lot. And kick-ass art and packaging. Duluth shitheads do it right! (FS)
(Automation Records Media Conglomerate)

MOPEY MUMBLE MOUSE – "I Am Happy Being Nothing" CD

Wow, is this the new wave of punk that I've been searching for, or just a very unique group that truly deserves recognition for originality and cleverness? When I first started listening to the CD I wasn't sure what to make of it, because at times it reminded me of later-era ANTIOCH ARROW or STARLIGHT DESPERATION, but then there was so much more going on that it became hard to come up with a comparison. The lyrics are incredible, perfectly articulating the surreal world of dumb America with the kind of sarcasm and wittiness that originally drew me into punk with bands like DEAD KENNEDYS and CRUCIFUCKS. And I can list these two bands as a very subtle reference here as well. The release is also a total DIY effort, put out by the band themselves. Can I come up with one gripe? Sure, it's the occasional annoying screaming that happens only a few times throughout the album. But fuck, don't let that stop you from checking out this amazing band. (BG)
(Mope)

MORTO PELA ESCOLA / NAIFA – split CD

This is a split between two Brazilian bands. MORTO PELA ESCOLA starts it out with eight sloppy skate-punk songs. All the lyrics are in Portuguese, of which I have very little understanding, so I'd just be guessing what the songs are about. However, there are all these cool drawing of kids and skeletons skateboarding, and what appear to be some activities that I will refer to as "fucking shit up." Not bad! NAIFA is similar, with an early '80s vibe à la the ADOLESCENTS. (BD)
(Faca Cega / Revista Prego / Laja)

NEW SET OF BRUISES – CD

Very mediocre mid-tempo melodic punk from England. It's pop-punk with the fun taken out (Adult Oriented Pop-Punk?), "serious" music like JETS TO BRAZIL. I could pay this a huge compliment and compare them to SOUTHPORT but this is nowhere near as good. Sorry. (AD)
(Boss Tuneage)

NIGHT BIRDS – "Killer Waves/Squad Car"

Early AGENT ORANGE is an obvious reference point, but with less distortion (and more reverb) on the guitar, demo/garagey recording quality and reasonably tight harmonies on the A-side. "Squad Car" is a well-executed tear through the EDDIE AND THE SHOWMEN instro classic. (DD)
(Art of the Underground)

THE NIPPLES – "Live in Mary Jane" CD

Eight tracks, eleven minutes and a straight-ahead ferocious attack speed that brings to mind some of the better 1982 bands. The only real drag is the vocalist, who tends to sing every song in an annoying monotone. Not quite as bad as Calvin's efforts on DISCHARGE's *Grave New World*, but not much better. And the music rocks in that ARTICLES OF FAITH raging vein. (RK)
(Basement)

OFFENDERS – "Anthology 1981-1985" CD

This is the second OFFENDERS reissue I've reviewed in the last five years; I'm kinda surprised the masses were clamoring for more. The OFFENDERS had their share of good songs ("I Hate Myself," "Face Down in the Dirt," etc.) but the majority of their stuff from this era is mediocre thrash with monochromatic vocals—like early MDC without the political convictions. The strangest thing here is that the liner notes mention this CD was released to make up for the Grand Theft Audio reissue having "apparent technical issues… that were never addressed" and being "not to the band's standards." However, not only does *Anthology 1981-1985* annoyingly mix all the tracks from different releases together out of sequence, whoever mastered it neglected to make everything the same loudness—so the songs from *We Must Rebel* are way quieter than the rest of material, which means you gotta fiddle with the volume every other track or so, or just sit through a very uneven listen. Furthermore, the earliest stuff on this CD is from 1983… It's fine that the person who compiled this didn't want to include the OFFENDERS' 1981 single with a different vocalist (their best stuff, by the way) but then why not just call the friggin' thing *Anthology 1983-1985*? Sheesh. To top it off, the cover is ugly (shoulda stuck with the tasteful black and white of the inside booklet). It really says something when your reissue's artwork is bested by Grand Theft Audio's. Anyway, perhaps I'm being overly critical—what you get is a *legit* reissue of the band's two LPs, their second 7" and their song from the *Metal Moo Cow* comp, plus some cool flyers and photos. I'm obviously not a fan, but maybe you are… (CS)
(Just 4 Fun)

THEE OH SEES – "Warm Slime" LP

This San Francisco band is the latest brainchild of John Dwyer, who is probably best known for the COACHWHIPS. Over the last several years, THEE OH SEES (in various incarnations) have demonstrated many moods, from noise soundscapes to quiet lo-fi introspection, but this seven-song album captures them doing what (I think) they do best: raw garage psych-pop with memorable hooks, buried under layers of distorto sludge, reverb and echo. While I admire the radio-baiting bravado of releasing a record with a thirteen-minute title track, I have to say I found the song itself fairly tedious after a while. That was maybe the point, but I don't think I'm on the right drugs (read: any drugs) to appreciate it. The rest of the songs, however, come in at the much more respectable (and traditional) two-and-a-half to three-and-a-half minute range, yet still manage to accommodate a plethora of textures and effects. I'm reminded in places of such disparate comparisons as the CRAMPS, 13TH FLOOR ELEVATORS, the FALL, and even the HAPPY MONDAYS. Local crowds have been witnessed to go completely bonkers for these folks so I think it's only a matter of time before the pixie-dust acid-eating mod-ettes at your local coffee shop and all points east are swooning over them, too. (AM)
(In the Red)

OXXON – "Radio Zero" CD

Meaty, thickly produced punky rock from Germany here. It basically plods along at medium pace with loud guitars, a tight rhythm section and the occasional guitar lead. The vocals are a little raw and guttural. The problem here is that the songs start to bleed together: they all sound the same. This band appears to have been around for a while and have obviously landed on something that works for them, but I could have used a little more variety. (AM)
(Oxxon)

PARAE – "Tinnitus" LP

"Oh who are we? Well we're just a few guys having a good time, playing rock'n'roll for our friends, and more importantly, for ourselves. A lot of people get into music to make money and a lot of people get into music to get girls, but not us, we're just here to have *fun*!" Listen, you deadshits, it's 2010. The world is ending, this time for real. I'm addicted to drugs and my dick feels like it's going to fall off. I throw up sometimes for no reason. I have a headache and my dog has an eye infection. For some reason the music *you* play sounds like CUTS played by college graduates who have heard a single CUTS song and like having a good time with their friends. You have fucking zombies on your record cover. Do you think zombies are cool? Do you think you are in a good band? You will be sitting on this record for years. I hope all your dreams are crushed and your girlfriends, whose MySpace pictures you use on the insert for you crappy Pirates Press-style record, die of typhus in some awful Muslim prison camp during the worst days of WWIII. 2010 is going to be the final horrible year, the ending to a double millennia and beyond of horrible years, and I hope you have all the fun you can eating shit and playing this terrible music until the bombs begin to drop. I can't relate, and most likely, neither can you (the reader). Let it lie in bargain bins

and spend your money on heroin. (BB)
(Para Soniq)

PART-TIME CHRISTIANS – "Rock and Roll Is Disco" CD

Color me impressed. I had no knowledge of this Bay Area band until now. The material on this collection includes a demo from 1983, an EP from '84, and an EP from 2008. PART-TIME CHRISTIANS played a brand of motoring, metallic hardcore punk with some extremely vicious vocals. It's at times plodding and nasty, and ripping and cranking at others. When the pace picks up, the tunes can be in league with early ACCÜSED, ATTITUDE ADJUSTMENT, SUICIDAL, etc. Of the twenty-one songs, five (!!!) are about bowling, and one is a rap song…in the '80s style, of course. The 2008 EP is *wayyy* more SABBATH/heavy metal/FAITH NO MORE influenced and kinda funny but still totally listenable in a "Hey dude, check this *ouuuut*" kind of way. The first EP (especially the first song) is wild and cool. (JU)
(Taang!)

THE PEOPLE'S TEMPLE – "You Don't Know (Just Where I Been)" EP

We have a winner! Title song starts off fast enough that I first thought 45 must be the wrong speed, then a quick taste of LINK WRAY/DICK DALE riffing before lurching into a song that recalls the 13TH FLOOR ELEVATORS' "You Don't Know (How Young You Are)" in the classic kids-who-don't-care rewrite fashion. Plus it sounds kind of like the TRADITIONAL FOOLS with some weird guitar sounds and has a nice freak-out at the end. "Shoot Her Down" is a nice shot of garagey R&B and "Raft" is another dip in the garagey end of the psychedelia pool. (DD)
(Certified PR)

PIGEON RELIGION – "Crystallized Meth/Rust & Dust"

Aw man, this is good. Slow and plodding, sounding like a clandestine recording from the next room in the middle of the night with creepy serial killer lighting. The beginning death drums and sludge terror speeds along like STRESS APE with completely different instrumentation (guitars instead of synths). Side A moves along like this in a way that makes it seem like it would be totally fine if they stayed like that for the whole side. It speeds up and gets louder and the vocals kick in and it manages to get even fucking better. This is the sound of all the horrid isolation that comes from places like the Central Valley in California. Shit-town deserts packed full of meth. The second side features animalistic drum pounds and desperate howls. I feel like this is what PSYCHEDELIC HORSESHIT and other bands of that ilk would sound like when they start running out of drug money, start exclusively having bad trips and shit gets really dark and bleak. I imagine live they end up being the chaotic type feedback shitstorm that CCR HEADCLEANER is. Here's hoping. Oh, and P.S. there are only 420 of these (fucking stoners). (MM)
(Video Disease)

POSITIVE NOISE / XTRA VOMIT – split EP

POSITIVE NOISE definitely lives up to their name. With lyrics like "Life is yours, live it how you want" and "Love is great, it's not a power struggle," they have the posi spirit down pat. And with a recording that sounds like parts of it took place beneath a pile of mattresses, they've got the "noise" part covered as well. Don't take that as criticism, though—the somewhat muffled sound fits their fast hardcore quite well. On the flipside, XTRA VOMIT plays a similar style of fast and pissed hardcore, with maybe a bit of grind influence thrown into the mix. Also angrier lyrics and less mosh. It's nice to get a split where both sides here are fucking top notch. Pick this one up. (VX)
(IFB)

THE PROCESS / ROT IN HELL – split 45

Like Satan? Hate Gawd? This is for you! The PROCESS churns out a mid-tempo metallic hardcore song with vocals reminiscent of (yet higher than) Micke from WOLFBRIGADE. There are some contemplative slower-tempo parts, too. The song is simple and sometimes repetitive, but atmospheric and even sort of calming and pretty at times. It picks up at the end with some straight-up metal guitar chunks. I can hear the CELTIC FROST influence, but the PROCESS by no means is a rip-off. The ROT IN HELL track has a quicker tempo than the PROCESS side. The vocals at the beginning are pretty cool with some humming along, then switch to a higher style similar to the PROCESS and a low gargled, satanic, metalicious voice, both different in pitch and harmonization over one another! The music is D-beat-influenced with some metal creeping in. The lyrics of both bands are metal as all hell (get it??); serious and at times annoyingly poetic. I studied the shit out of some Milton, but rarely can anyone write like him… Both bands would fit the bill at Maryland Death Fest. The hate coming off of this record is palpable and the music is good, but I am willing to bet seeing either band live will blow the recording away. (MB)
(Feast of Tentacles)

THE PULSES – "10 Song Demo" LP

Ten songs originally part of a 30-song demo CD that the PULSES released in 2000. Goofy punk with a punchy musical style. Simple, catchy and frank. Reminds me of HICKEY during their more poppy moments. (CK)
(Wolf Dog)

RAKOSI – "Dobo" EP

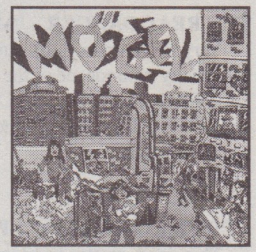
Named after a Stalinist dictator of Hungary, this Hungarian band delivers the ten tracks of rudimentary world brute hardcore, savage scalding-vocalled stabs, quick 1-2 bursts of guitar and drums. Not the crust or mid-tempo gloom that Eastern European hardcore often implies, this more snappy and quick early '80s-styled hardcore is punctuated by vocals like those of a Japanese or South American hardcore band. The lyrics, while sung in the native language, translate to comparatively dreary, sex-slasher-movie styled horror fare and weird surrealist vignettes rather than political. Scathing! (KS)
(Lengua Armada)

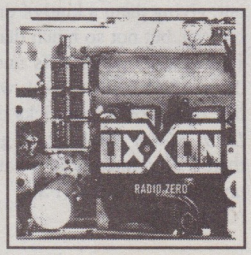
RATFACE – "Ratassed" CD

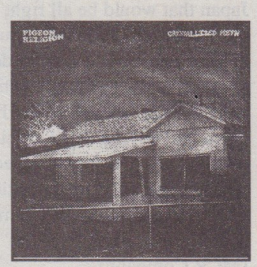
Flipping past the "Itchy and Scratchy" (*Simpsons*) cartoon-looking cover, find ten tracks of Finnish wigger-party-metal-dude-thrash with actual lyrics like "I drank so much it nearly turned me gay / But I don't care, I'm married to the booze / Pussy or pintz, pussy always lose" (yikes, where do you start with that?—yes, ladies in the audience, you can all get up and leave now) and "I'm just another crazytown coolio / Gonna beat down the foolioz" (shit, that probably now includes me, your humble reviewer). Like a combination of MUNICIPAL WASTE, later ATTITUDE ADJUSTMENT and LIMP BIZKIT, it's similar to bro-core and late-'00s party metal in that it's played perfectly with taut, fast metal-band delivery, mechanical double-bass precision with harsh, rapid-fire vocals...which throws in a rap at a point. I think a lot of crossover and the recent "cross back" has been music for people with not a lot of heavy thoughts or ideas on their plate besides youthful beer-drinking rage, and beyond the really stupid lyrics (most of which are about drinking), *Ratassed* is a rampaging enough listen with some funny moments, especially when it breaks down to the hilarious "after-party area" of reggae and German techno pisstakes. (KS)
(Full House)

RAYOS X – "Mi Desorden" EP

Martin scooped up a bunch of great new raw punk bands from LA…his recent clutch of records are fucking barnstormers. Along with the TUBERCULOSIS EP this band is one of my current faves. Hailing from the South Central Latino punk scene, this band murders it. Raw-as-fuck Spanish punk, like a mutuoid mix of '70s LA punk, classic Spanish hardcore and even some UK Riot City shit. This is pretty much the epitome of foreign language punk—raw, urgent and pissed. I'm old as fuck, but this shit makes me feel like a kid again. (TB)
(Lengua Armada)







THE REAL DANGER – "Making Enemies" CD

Very US-sounding pop punk from the Netherlands. This really reminds me of the early ATARIS as well as LAGWAGON and the DESCENDENTS. Pretty good stuff from a band new to me. Not original but very well done. (RL)
(Shield)

RED PENS – "Reasons" LP

This is a pretty good garage rock duo out of Minneapolis doing the whole guitar-and-drums thing. Most of the songs are mid-tempo and super fuzzed-out, giving them a kind of dreamy quality. Vocals are breathy, but not so much that they are annoying. The songwriting, guitar riffs and vocal delivery have a distinct PAVEMENT feel, while the recording seems like they took a few tricks out of the BLACK LIPS' *Let It Bloom* playbook. A good album, but bummer there's no printed lyrics, 'cause the words are hard to understand at times. (FS)
(Grain Belt)

REJECT – "Fight for Existence" CD

This is a five-piece street-punk-worship band from Japan that would be all right on a bill with bands like the CASULATIES, but would definitely be a touch harder. There are a few hardcore moments and some chorus vocals. The music is tight, polished and played well. The lyrics are all in English and about being punk and saying "fuck society." The vocal style is sorta snotty and high-pitched with a little gruffness, giving some good juxtaposition to the precision of the music. The disc doesn't jump out, but it's definitely something to party to. (MB)
(MCR Company)

RESURRECTIONISTS – LP

Fresh off the heels of their split with MERKIT comes the debut full-length from Germany's RESURRECTIONISTS. Their style of heavy hardcore hasn't changed, but the songs here are noticeably better than on the split. Everything seems more thought out, like they really took their time to make sure every part was in its place. While the split was good, this record is great, reminding me of other excellent German acts like TRAINWRECK and ZANN while still sounding original. It's great seeing a band come into their own, and this is that moment for RESURRECTIONISTS. (VX)
(Moment of Collapse / Parade of Spectres / IFB)

ROGERNOMIX – "Rogernomix" EP

New Zealand is really far from most *MRR* readers, but fuckshit if that sparsely populated island hasn't cranked out some serious hardcore in the last couple of years. Wellington's ROGERNOMIX (named for New Zealand's economic genius responsible for their 1980s version of "keep the rich rich and fuck the poor" Reaganomics) fucking annihilate six dark, crust-laden tunes with male/female vocal exchanges and an emphasis on the attack...an attack that sometimes breaks for melody (like the intro to "Fear of Work") but always delivers. Extremely limited (150 copies) and rather expensive as a result, but totally worth the $10 USD post-paid price tag. This shit is pissed and highly recommended. (WN)
(Always Never Fun)

ROYAL HEADACHE – "Eloise" EP

For once, I'm at a loss for words, so forgive any lapse in eloquence that may occur, but I'm truly speechless. ROYAL HEADACHE was the best band I saw last year and one of the best bands I've ever seen in my short, hideous life. The music, I'm not even sure how to describe it. It's punk with absolutely no pose, and honestly, this is pop done through a punk lens and it works perfectly. Shogun, the singer, is as manic a vocalist as any before but has the best voice I've ever witnessed in person. The music doesn't slack either, and though the arrangements are slightly amateurish at times, it all seems to work out exactly the way I hope it does through the course of the tunes. This has to be heard to be believed, and if you buy one record from that lazy continent, make it ROYAL HEADACHE. (BB)
(RIP Society)

LOS SAICOS – "¡Demolición!" CD

A complete discography of the true maniac forefathers of Peruvian garage LOS SAICOS!! It's hard to believe these 45s were emitted between '65 and '66—how were such wild sounds able to be contained and transmitted on 7" vinyl without some producer trying to numb'n'dumb it down?? Doesn't matter! The fact is this band transformed South American garage and rock'n'roll via these total insane bolts of venom and destruction, with songs about cemeteries, destroying train stations and dead cats... Apparently a popular radio station used to play "Demolición" as a wake-up call each morning. You can see why. The music is savage and liberating, and it's clear this is where the BLACK LIPS got some of their cues. This was also released as a six-7" box set, which may be more appealing for your wild up-all-night teen dance party stylings? Apparently a film is on the way too—would love to see some old TV show footage. (LG)
(Munster)

SALVATION CITY ROCKERS – "Too Young To Die, Too Fast To Live" 2xLP

It's tough to pull off a double-LP unless you're IRON MAIDEN. This shit is super competent French street punk. The band has a definite skinhead vibe, but enough punk and rock'n'roll to keep things moving. At times they remind me of a slicker DEADLINE (without Liz's amazing vocals) or a more skin WASTED. I totally dig this and all you skins, punks and herberts will too. (TB)
(Joe Pogo)

SCHIZOPHASIA – "II" EP

Fucking prolific! Canada's mysterious noise purveyors return with another cryptic EP. Perhaps it's the mastering, but it seems like this one is a bit more blown-out and tinny than their first. The material is as strong as ever though. Alongside rickety CRASS-meets-GAI hardcore, there are feedback-drenched sound pieces that create an eerie atmosphere, perfectly complimenting their aesthetic. This is the epitome of anti-commercial music. There are no hooks, no attempts to appeal to a broad audience and no names attached. You either like it or you don't, and I suspect that these guys don't really give a fuck either way. Snap this up while you can, because it'll be out of print soon and probably forever. (AU)
(Damaging Noise)

SECOND BASE – "Manifesto" CD

There's always a danger that wearing one's influences proudly on one's sleeve (or perhaps as that stylish kamikaze headband) will tend to overshadow the homegrown output. Most particularly when that favorite cover-version is head and shoulders above the rest of the disc. And on the first couple of listens, I sincerely worried about these chaps. They perform a killer version of the LAWRENCE ARMS' "Brick Wall Views." And 'tis definitely the kind of melodic, gritty power tuneage, hoarse yet soulful that they're aiming for. And while said cover is definitely the highlight, after a few more spins, the rest comes fairly close. I could do without some of the acoustic histrionics, but a dash of some of the pyrotechnics of later/current PROPAGANDHI stylings actually spice it up a fair bit. Emo with some bollocks is just fine by me. Guessing by the names of the band and their buddies they thank, they're some Northern European concoction, too. (RK)
(Thanks But No Thanks)

TY SEGALL – "Ceasar/Bullet Proof Nothing"

The first time I saw TY SEGALL, it was at a mostly empty bar opening for a noise band who had set up an elaborate Fort-Thunder-style display on the stage. TY sat on a chair on the floor, with his drum and guitar and played a raw, unhinged and truly phenomenal set that reminded me of the BILLY CHILDISH song "Child's Death Letter." This single is a million miles from that sound, containing two sides of non-raw garage, more reminiscent of late-'60s KINKS and "I Know a Place" JAY REATARD. Really getting a *Muswell Hillbillies* feeling, though minus the cynicism. TY is from California and it shows... (LG)
(Goner)

SEXUAL SUICIDE – "Old School Rules" EP

About a week ago I made a late new year's resolution to try to stop telling old punk rock stories, relating tales of bands I was lucky to see in their prime or describing the initial reaction to some band or record "when it came out," because it pegs a past that has more weight than the present and it should never be like that. So, *Old School Rules*—nah, mate, you've gotten too old to remember that "no school rules." This New York band is reminiscent of a lot of '90s bands like early QUEERS, SCREECHING WEASEL or, maybe even at their fastest, ZEKE, where hardcore energy melded with rock'n'roll—the root was in '80s hardcore and punk but missed that mark and came up with still catchy music padded with melody, a few "woah woah" choruses and a musical proficiency that often escaped hardcore. There's no lyric sheet, but I'm guessing with song titles like "Mary Jane" and "Free Internet Porn" the revolution might not be around the corner; still, you'd be guaranteed a few good laughs at one of this band's gigs once you get back from the bar. (KS)
(United Riot)

THE SHANKS – "Backstabber" EP

The Pettibon-esque cover gives a quick hint as to what might lay inside: three manic, brutish, pounding songs. Don't get your hopes up for a BLACK FLAG-alike band though—the SHANKS deliver something more like some reverb-soaked REATARDS/FEELERS kind of mania. Totally frantic. (IS)
(Tic Tac Totally)

SHITSTORM – "Paranoid Existence" LP

This is a compilation of all SHITSTORM recordings, so if this is your jam go get it! The vocals are burly and some of the riffs are sick, especially the tremolo-picked ones. There are hardcore-ish breakdowns and constant blasting. Undoubtedly, SHITSTORM's style is well honed, the recordings are raw, but my favorite thing about the grindcore bands I like is not the blasting but the sections in between.

There's nothing like coming out of a blast with a bad-ass riff. I'm not hearing much of that here, but it's a pretty fun, brutal listen. (DB)
(Vinyl Rites)

SINKS – "I Drove the Sinks" EP

Perfectly acceptable garage punk. No better than that and no worse. (IS)
(Fashionable Idiots)

SLICES – "Crusing" LP

I have been listening to this record repeatedly since we got it, mostly the B-side. The sound is menacing, a mutant aggression that sometimes veers towards hardcore, but was referred to as "rock music" by another shitworker. (I hate rock music, what is that? PUDDLE OF MUDD?? TEMPLE OF THE DOG?) *Cruising* is the best thing I have heard in a long, long time. It's evocative and dark, multifaceted but heavy, the burliness of the sorta late-FLAG-era Ginn guitars never devolve into xeroxed duplications. You hear the reference, but the song structures are so imaginative and unsettling, and this along with the general feel of the record means there's no limp nostalgia here. The noise pieces in between the more conventional "songs" add to a feeling of impending doom. Mantooth's vocals are in shards—I don't mean that in a grind way, but rather in a manner that makes you feel like you are hearing half of a very disorientating phone conversation. SLICES started out as a noise band featuring two brothers; now they have two other members with more of a hardcore background. This fully realized and truly great LP reflects all of that information in a most eloquent manner than this review ever could. Serious contender for album of the year. Plus the cover photo of the band looks like a mix between a graduation/birthday car Sears photo-shoot and a third-rate straight-to-VHS action movie from 1991. (LG)
(Iron Lung)

SLIPPERY SLOPES – "Sad Tugs" EP

As I've said many times before, there is nothing like a well-done slab of lo-fi vinyl. You kids can have all your fucking BLINK 182 polished bullshit. Go ahead, eat that shit up. When you're ready to listen to something that's got some soul, come talk to me. This one is mid-tempo and catchy and features sort of screaming/yelling vocals. Oh, and guess what. It's got guitar and bass and drums. Pizza, I'm against it. (KK)
(Florida's Dying)

SLOANE PETERSON – "Knots" EP

So, as I recall, I reviewed these guys' Art of the Underground single several issues back and didn't really think much of it. While this one doesn't strike me as bad per se, it doesn't really leave me wanting more. The music has a pretty standard upbeat pop vibe, which means the real attention-getter should be the lyrical content—which unfortunately enough also happens to be pretty standard as well. Songs about girls get old quickly, especially when they're not cleverly written, which these are not. (BD)
(Financial Ruin / Steve's Pizza and Records)

SMOKE OR FIRE – "Speak Easy/Modesty"

The way this music sort of lunges, stops and starts and heaves, you can picture the hordes of teenagers surging forward, hands pointed at the band, eyes closed and mouths gaping, screaming out the lyrics. This is a very specific sort of post-emo pop-punk sound that is very appealing to the disgruntled youth, stuck out in the suburbs and small towns, waiting for Warped Tour. I sound dismissive. As they say, this isn't my thing, but I know it's the thing for many, and it doesn't seem to be coming from a lame corporate MTVemo place, so who am I to write it off? Some shitbag *MRR* critic who just doesn't get it… (LG)
(Fat Wreck)

SOCIETY NURSE – "Junk Existence" EP

First off, I must admit that I loved this record before I had even heard SOCIETY NURSE because of a YouTube video of them playing that I watched at work with the sound off. They just looked like they were killing it. So when my copy arrived in the mail and I put it on the turntable, I was in no way surprised when it blew me away. A little Gravity Records, a little BLACK FLAG and a whole lot of originality and things that no one has tried yet… *aaand* the artwork is fucking gorgeous. The music is fast and head-fucking with the bass and guitar's discord and squeal, drums like clockwork and a screaming mad vocalist that sounds as wild as the music. Made up of folks from IRON LUNG, WALLS, COLD SWEAT, BOOKBURNER and FIGHTING DOGS for those with a scorecard. Iron Lung Records is still batting a thousand in my book and as far as SOCIETY NURSE is concerned, I want more! (JU)
(Iron Lung)

STATUES – "New People Make Us Nervous" 12" EP

I've liked previous releases from this band, but they sometimes take some time to grow on me. I'm digging this one right out of the gate. It's mid-tempo. It's catchy. It's artsy, but not so artsy that it makes me think they're trying too hard. It's also got this JAM thing going on that I don't think I've ever been able to pinpoint before. And I don't know why, exactly, but these guys continue to remind me of MISSION OF BURMA, though not so "heavy." This will definitely get some play on my turntable. (KK)
(Deranged)

ST. DAD – "Jobs and Junk" EP

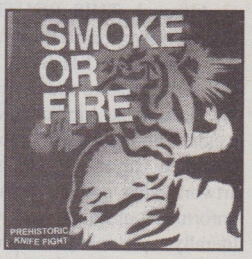
No one can accuse these guys of not being punk. This shit rules. Totally blown-out and fuzzed-out music. You can just barely hear enough of it to understand it's interesting and totally crucial. BLATZ fans take note. The songs are short, catchy, gross, snotty and super fun. The lyrics are cool; the cover art is awesomely dumb. Four great songs here but seriously sounds like it was recorded on a boombox in a basement. Most demo tapes sound better. (FS)
(self-released)

STRIKE BACK – CD

Russia's STRIKE BACK seems to have a lot of musical ideas—maybe too many. They mix melodic emo hardcore, post-rock and indie rock on this disc. The good parts are the discordant yet melodic guitar and prominent bass; the bad part is that a lot of it comes across as stiff with too many ideas in each song and a slight sense of wanting to play complex songs but forgetting the songwriting. That might sound a bit harsh…I don't think it's that bad. Think THEMA or SAETIA mixed with AT THE DRIVE IN. (MH)
(Rumble Fish)

SUBHUMANS – "Same Thoughts Different Day" 2xLP

Just the thought of a punk classic being re-recorded in the modern day is enough to bring shivers to any true music fan; I mean, have you ever heard SUICIDAL TENDENCIES "new vision" of their first and best album? Are ya fuckin' kidding me? So naturally I approached this, a new recording of the godlike *Incorrect Thoughts* LP, with trepidation and cynicism. But hold on, what's this? Sounds pretty damn good! The SUBHUMANS didn't redo this album out of some pathetic need to revisit the past or anything; but rather because of a lame legal dispute involving the rights to the original recordings. They also decided to record six other tunes that were written in those days of yore, the late '70s/early '80s, to make this new release even more desirable (and they are all great, by the way). Admittedly the new production is somewhat cleaner and oh-so-slightly more poppy than the original, but not enough to deter the punks. The SUBHUMANS were/are one of the greatest punk bands of all time, and these new recordings just demonstrate that they haven't lost their touch at all. If you have the original, by all means don't get rid of it; but if your collection suffers from lack of this extremely mandatory album then you are now in luck. (BG)
(Alternative Tentacles)



SUPERIOR UNITS – "Take Her in the Classroom" EP

Wow. I really like this. It's super lo-fi and super catchy in an off-key kind of way, if that makes any sense. This is impressive, because the "catchy but off-key" thing can be tough to pull off and when it doesn't work, it really doesn't work. But this does work. These guys also put a fair amount of effort into writing very childish songs about sex and body parts. Again, they really manage to pull it off quite nicely. Well done, shitheads. Now, all of you take a time-out. (KK)
(Plastic Idol)

TEENAGERS – "Give Me Pink" LP

As if there weren't enough OH SEES records coming out, now begins the wave of soundalike bands. Or maybe I'm just now catching wind of them. The TEENAGERS catch a wave somewhere between the OH SEES and BLACK LIPS. Vocals are thick with effects for a nasal/echo presence that dominates the record; lots of reverb on the guitars and all over the place; tambourine, female vocals occasionally wander in. I dunno…they do it well, but they're what they do has been done, and done, and done. (IS)
(Telephone Explosion)

THAT'S INCREDIBLE – "Aquanet" EP

Pop-punk from members of TOYS THAT KILL, the SOVIETTES, KILLER DREAMER and DICK ARMY. The lyrics are kind of goofy, then kind of sincere. The music is very polished. It is inoffensive enough and it's just too clean for me. (CK)
(It's Alive)

THIEVES – "Positive Vibrations" EP

I was really stoked on the THIEVES demo that came through a few months back, and while this EP is a little more polished, these North Carolina kids still deliver. Eight songs of mid-paced hardcore that *sounds* like it comes from the South while still paying homage to NYHC and '90s 'crew. Seems like an odd combo, but I assure you that the end result totally works, and though I think it sounds like THIEVES are a little restrained on this release, the songs are fucking ace. (WN)
(To Live a Lie)

THIS ROUTINE IS HELL – "The Verse Crusade" CD

Although THIS ROUTINE IS HELL seems to have narrowly based their sound on modern hardcore staples like PAINT IT BLACK and CEREMONY, they still deliver a solid and entertaining full-length despite the undeniable similarities to the aforementioned bands. The production is top-notch and the music is obviously played with energy and passion, though the artwork ranks up there with some of hardcore's most unfortunate mistakes. So if you can bring yourself to, literally, overlook the album cover, you may be able to enjoy a pissed-off, punk-as-shit record with good melody, songwriting and familiarity. (RM)
(Shield)

T.H.U.G. – LP

Hard not to shed a tear here, since this was supposed to be Bruce's review to write. For those "four fans" that he always talked about not disappointing, if you haven't already picked this up because of last month's column, here is more instruction to do so. T.H.U.G. is perfect Bruce music…working class geezer biker-Oi from Australia. Street rock'n'roll the way it should be: nasty, ugly, honest, and from-the-gut feelings spilled over catchy choruses and good leads. The track "Gunnin' 4 U" is the standout here with Angry Anderson of ROSE TATTOO fame contributing on a verse. This one comes highly recommended for all you punks and skins. (JU)
(Rock'n'Roll Disgrace)

TINSEL TEETH – "Trash as the Trophy" CD

Sounds like L7 playing STONE TEMPLE PILOTS. Or possibly SYSTEM OF A DOWN. Not my kind of grunge. In other words: shitty. (MM)
(Load)

TOXIC FUSE – "Gone Too Long/Set My Soul on Fire"

I don't know how many of you out there pay for a practice space, but in a major metropolitan city (such as San Francisco), there aren't a lot of soundproofed parents' garages in which you can string together a few chords with some fat kids, so you have to move into one of these big drafty buildings that speck the downtown. Sometimes when you go to take a crap in the damp, leaky bathrooms by the entrance you hear other bands practicing. They are always, without exception, complete garbage. The worst is when sometimes when you're taking a big old shit that you can't finish off no matter how many times you try to close the hole, and above you is this band practicing and you can hear every fuckin' reverbed, forced, cringing note. This band, this TOXIC FUSE (even the name recalls graffiti I'd see near the soda machines), I swear to god this is the band that haunted my mid-teen shits. Practice-space rock of the worst order. (BB)
($5 ppd: Helltunes)

TRASTE & SUPERSTARARNA – "Du Din Javla Sopa" CD

A compilation of recordings by this late-'70s/early-'80s Swedish punk band. Catchy and poppy, mostly fast-ish polished punk, but once in a while slowing down and even going a bit rockabilly. The songs are sung in Swedish except for one. An interesting example of what the punks were doing in Sweden at the time. Includes their first single "Pengar/Traktor" which one Swedish newspaper declared the single of the year for 1979. (CK)
(Massproduktion)

TROPIEZO / LA VERGEN DEL POZO – split EP

While I'm hardly a specialist in punk hailing from Puerto Rico, this split EP has an urgent, underground sound thanks to the simple production and frantic mid-'80s punk flavor—at least with the clutch of songs from TROPIEZO; it's uniformly strong and accessible. On the other hand, LA VERGEN DEL POZO is closer to grindcore, with white-hot guitar over a backdrop of throat-destroying vocals; it's intricate, but extremely effective, and highlighted by the amazing "Mi Realidad Es Una Pescadilla..." Both bands offer real winners here. Highly recommended. (SS)
(Discos de Hoy)

TUBERCULOSIS – "Disfrasandose" EP

This TUBERCULOSIS 7", along with the RAYOS X 7" are great intros to a really inspiring group of kids in South Central LA. They do silk-screening, make badges, do print and video zines, book shows, put out tapes and run a label, have a record store, and play in great bands; TUBERCULOSIS being my favorite of the bunch. They play raw thrashy hardcore punk with melody and Reyna's voice is really commanding and vicious in a way that demands you to pay attention. This really comes through in a live setting somewhat more than on record, but this record still fucking rules. Two songs sung in Spanish and two in English, and they mostly take on the subject of selling out and/or co-opting culture and forgetting who you are. *Killer* EP. (JU)
(Lengua Armada)

UNKIND – "Yhteiskunnan Pikkuvikoja" LP

This is the third LP by UNKIND, a band I've never given a good listen too 'til now. I always guessed they had a heavy TRAGEDY influence or fell within that sub-genre of crust, and they definitely do. This LP strikes me as a progression from what I've heard of earlier material (it's their best according to a fellow reviewer here!). As usual there's much layering and texture to the guitars, but the melodies are a bit more subtle and dark than on their previous output. The vocals are never too up-front, and the singer has a raspy yell that blends with the music pretty well. In terms of the record itself (i.e. the sleeve and insert), it looks really nice. A CD version of the album is included with the LP. This is a solid slab of melancholic, anarcho-hardcore that sounds something like a less metal-crust MARTYRDÖD. If you're into the band's earlier material, or into this style in general, it would be wise to purchase this record. (DB)
(Alerta Antifascista / Rinderherz)

UNWED TEENAGE MOTHERS – "If That's Love" EP

I love the recent slew of young bands wrapping sugary gumball pop in punk rock fuzz. The band has the same PLIMSOULS-meets-RIP-OFFS style that makes the BARE WIRES so great—and, for that matter, the MARKED MEN. All the songs zip; fuzzed-out guitars, killers vox and shit's done in a couple of minutes. Can't ask a punk EP for much more. (TB)
(Tic Tac Totally)

USELESS EATERS – "Panic Attack" EP

The newest single from a Memphis-based outfit whose lead singer/guitarist employs a rotating cast of accompanists. "Panic Attack" is a barrage of KBD trash fuzz that attempts to sit alongside singles like SHOCK's "This Generation's on Vacation" but the man behind USELESS EATERS is perhaps a little too smart and self-aware to reach that level of stupid reckless abandon. The flip is a quieter one-man recording full of attitude, but like the main offering it doesn't really stick to the bones. (AL)
(Jeth-Row)

THE VACCINES – "Fool Injekted Punk" LP

This is… awesome! No—not just awesome. This is fucking *awesome*!! From what I can gather, the VACCINES are no longer with us, and this is a posthumous release dating back to 1998 comprised of some demos, possibly an EP and some live tracks. There is not a lot of specific info about this Seattle punk rock'n'roll band here, but this is a fucking cool release—on dark marbled colored vinyl with a *huge* 36" x 36" poster and an eight-page full-color booklet included, so you get a lotta bang for your buck! I'm pretty sure that this is a "Jaks" band, so if you are familiar with that, you pretty much know what to expect: lotsa beer, lotsa tattoos, lotsa skateboarding and lotsa fun. The Jaks are a self-professed "drinking team with a skateboarding problem"!! As for the

music, they are surprisingly tight considering the drunken state they were most likely in when playing. There is nothing unique or original with this, which is part of the appeal—it's just pure, straight-ahead punk rock'n'roll. This is the real deal. No pansy, posturing poseurs here. The VACCINES rock, and they rock hard with an aggression and attitude reminiscent of the halcyon days of the '80s when punk wasn't watered down by the likes of Hot Topic and the internet!! A good indication of where these guys are coming from is perfectly summarized by their choice of covering "Alcohol" by GANG GREEN... Get this if you *don't* like BLINK 182, GOOD CHARLOTTE and all those pathetic excuses for punk rock!! (ML)
(Wolf Dog)

VARAUS – "1/1" LP

Ripping, fist-pumping action galore is contained on this awesome reissue/discography of sorts in some very fine packaging (you wish everyone paid as much attention to detail as Feral Ward) from these classic Finnish thrashers. So we get six out of nine songs from the 1982 *1/2* LP, the 1983 *Tuomittu Elamaan* EP, the songs from the *Yalta Hi-Life* comp, material from 1984 and three unreleased songs from 1983 from the same sessions as the EP. If you do not already own the original records, there is no reason why you shouldn't purchase this one. No fan of raw, primitive punk rock should be without a copy. (RR)
(Feral Ward)

VERMILLION SANDS – CD

Pleasant country-ish garage rock with an Italian vocalist who sounds very much like HOLLY GOLIGHTLY. The vocals are dreamy and nice. Acoustic guitars strum and the rest of the band creates a bit of a carnival-type musical atmosphere. (CK)
(Alien Snatch)

VERMILLION SANDS – "Something Wrong" EP

Could be off here, but I believe this is the fourth single from this Italian group. And while we're counting, chalk me up to be the umpteenth person to point out the heavy HOLLY GOLIGHTLY influence that VERMILLION SANDS seems to fully embrace. It's effortless-sounding Western-tinged swagger meets breathy, laid-back noise-pop from the female-fronted group, who is too competent and also too cool while still far from dull despite some blatant homage rambling. None of this review is a shock to anyone who has heard and appreciated VERMILLION SANDS before and, reassuringly, this EP isn't so much a step forward as an addition to the collection of already worthy songs and releases VERMILLION SANDS has under their belt. (AL)
(Hell Yes)

LA VOZ – "Deprimido" EP

Los Angeles has been representing with some bad-ass bands lately and LA VOZ is a perfect example of this. Imagine BATTALION OF SAINTS mixed with REVOLUCION X and maybe LIFE'S HALT and you will start to get the picture of what sound these guys are going for. The songs are fast and powerful, but slightly slowed down enough to allow this band distinction. What LA VOZ has in common with other American Spanish-language hardcore bands is a keen awareness of political and social issues, which manifest into meaningful lyrics. I promise you that you'll flip this over a few times before taking it off the turntable, but it's limited to 500 copies so act quickly! (BG)
(Lengua Armada)

WAKING THE DEAD – "Empire" 10"

I was initially turned off by the water-colored torture scene WAKING THE DEAD decided was a good choice for their album cover; my attitude quickly changed though once the needle dropped on this *Dealing-With-It*-style thrash barrage. From start to finish these Dutchmen fly through their songs with awesome treble-heavy riffage that straddles the crossover genre. Think DRI, think 1985, think pre-solo action. Not to say the band is just a tribute act—far from it. They thrash hard but keep it real with lyrical topics ranging from the random (tsunami) to the obvious (thrashing time) to the progressive (LGBT). The music rips and keeps the listener interested song to song. Solid. (RM)
(Crew for Life Europe / Holy Shit / Rocke Mutante)

THE WAYWARD – "Alzheimer's" EP

These three songs will certainly keep your attention for the duration of the record. With two originals and a sadistic cover of the BIRTHDAY PARTY's "The Friend Catcher" (aptly renamed "The Chum Snatcher" for their rendition), the WAYWARD has made a believer outta me. The original numbers border on a prog/punk psych jam, which I find kinda incredible. At one point during a repeat listen to "Alzheimer's" I was thinking you could replace the vocals with Jarrod from BIG BUSINESS/KARP and we'd be in the same realm. But before I could nosh on that thought a little more, "Ripcord" interrupted and blew me away. Much more FUCKING CHAMPS in the best sense. Pretty cool, prolly not for every one, but glad I heard it. (RM)
(Forcefield)

WHAT WE FEEL – "Our 14 Words" CD

WHAT WE FEEL is an anti-racist hardcore band from Moscow. Their style is a cross between modern metallic NYHC and more traditional '80s hardcore. With song titles like "Always Anti-Fascist," GNWP" (short for Good Night White Pride) and "No Racism—No Problems," the band's convictions should be obvious. They seem very genuine in their beliefs, and they're quite possibly involved in the often extremely violent and even deadly confrontations between antifas and neo-Nazis in Russia, but that doesn't make me like their music. I can definitely picture hundreds of able-bodied, hyper-masculine young anti-racist skinheads climbing over each other at the front of the stage and tearing shit up in the pit at one of their shows, but I can't picture myself as one of them. (VX)
(An'na Nadel / Rumble Fish / etc.)

WHITE LUNG – "Atlanta" EP

How fortuitous that I should receive this EP, my being from Atlanta and all. This is obviously a divine intervention. I saw them recently with NU SENSAE, and I deeply enjoyed myself. Now, listening to this recording, I am thrilled to say that this super fast gothy riot grrl crew has most righteously gratifying arrangements of tinny and repetitive guitar, heavy meandering bass lines, and straightforward dramatic percussion. All this combined with the Poly Styrene/Cherie Currie vocals makes for a pretty compelling sound. And although this is not the best 7" of theirs that I've heard, I still haven't stopped flipping it after listening to it eight times. Apparently, Vancouver has a lot to offer. (HD)
(Deranged)

WHITE MYSTERY – LP

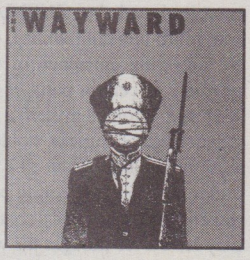
Two-person deal that certainly feels more like a whole legion of pounding garage lovin' Vikings. It's got that SHANNON AND THE CLAMS feel, 'specially the vocals and production but with a bit more push, pump and thud. Even a slight hint of early SOUXISE AND THE BANSHEES and GUN CLUB—maybe it's the tribal groove and a nice hint of semi-goth darkness. I'm digging. (SD)
(self-released)

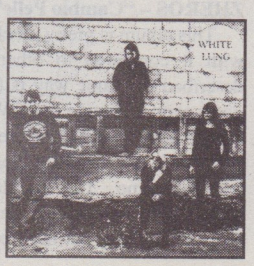
WHITE PAGODA – "Chair Evolution (Not Design)" CD

Not unlike the UNWED TEENAGE MOTHERS this band combine some ripping pop tunes with a bunch of punk rock fuzz. Definitely Euro sounding (MOJOMATICS, LES HATEPINKS), but kinda more pop/garage than swaggering skinny tie punk. Not sure they are totally in my camp with lyrics like "I'm feeling so electric baby / We play like LA Lakers." Huh?! Songs are ripping, though. (TB)
(Teen Sound)

WIND WAKER – CD

This sounds like SLEATER-KINNEY trying to play mathed-





up, tweed-out SHELLAC songs. It's also a really clean recording with no danger to be found anywhere. And how many times can you fucking say "baby" in a song, let alone an album? Annoying. (MM)
(Heartless Robot)

WOUNDED LION – CD

I liked this band's first 7", particularly the song "Carol Cloud." It made me think of Doug Yule-era VELVET UNDERGROUND or the MIRRORS. Everything I have heard since has sort of ground those ideas into dust, overworking them until there's no life left. An album full of this weird pastiche sound just comes across as palid and tame. You can picture a room full of anoraked, Buddy Holly spex wearers having mini-seizures over them, but for this girl, they just don't have enough hooks or imagination. (LG)
(In the Red)

YOUNG GENERALS – "Reconnecting" EP

I never really know what to say about records like this. It's very clean, over-produced melodic emo pop in which I really have no interest, but I know full well there are lots of kids out there who love this stuff. I get a *lot* of records like this one to review. So many, I honestly sat here for a while trying to figure out whether or not I had already reviewed this one. It all just blends together as one big glob of music that I don't like. (BD)
(Intervention)

YOUNG GOVERNOR – "Call Me When the Cat Dies/Fade Away"

Great new single from the one-man recording project (and FUCKED UP member/accomplice) YOUNG GOVERNOR. "Call Me When the Cat Dies" shares the urgency (as well as the similarities to the ADVERTS) of much of JAY REATARD's *Blood Visions* LP... The B-side is an OASIS cover done in an upbeat mod/power-pop style that manages to remain faithful to that band's '60s influences. My brother and I love OASIS and I love this. YOUNG GOVERNOR's "English Tim" single was great and this is one is a worthy addition to the canon. (AM)
(Criminal IQ)

ZHENIA GOLOV – "Defined by Confines" LP

This is a tough sell for me, partly due to the bleak and uninteresting character of the LP and partly because I was never really grabbed by the music. I was intrigued by ZHENIA GOLOV's influences and genre-blending ability, but I soon grew tired of the changing ambiance of the record. The melodic intensity of certain parts or songs was not supported well and I found myself a bit board and my mind wondering. The tracks would drag out into *slooooow* solo-ridden jams when all I wanted to hear was these dudes rage through a song or two. The elements for a tuff record are certainly present but I think these guys may have over-thought the whole thing. (RM)
(Railroaded)

ZHEROS – "Cambio Pelle" CD

This album is pretty much half good. The problem with it compared to other records that could be described the same way is that every song has both good parts and lame ones. When they're raging with the straightforward hardcore they really tap into that wild spirit that makes Italian hardcore so distinctive and awesome. The problem is that they're so dedicated to proving that they're awesome musicians. They totally are, but the frequent moments of guitar and bass wanking really drag the songs down. As far as "modern" HC goes they're not terrible, but really... enough with the solos. Go fast guys, it works for you. (AU)
(Havin' a Spazz, no info)

V/A – "Barcelona Käos" LP

This is a compilation from Barcelona, Spain featuring the some of the new heavier bands coming out of a city that is already kicking out some awesome shit. The music leans on the D-beat, crust, grind side and does a pretty damn good job of repping the versatility of those scenes booming in Spain. At first listen, it didn't grab me, but now I really wanna get this fucking comp!! There are a few songs I don't really dig, but the standouts are worth it! There are a whole lot of killer tracks on here, my favorites being MOBCHARGE's "Victimas del Extermino," NO CONFORME's "Nightmare," DISPUTA's "Dis or Die," CRIMEN DE ESTADO's "Estoy Fuera," MÖRDARE's "H.B.A.," TOTÄLICKERS' "Total Rejected" and VIOLENT HEADACHE "Helado de Fresa," which has lyrics that include (translated) "I love dogs asses on my pillow / Punk is not a strawberry ice cream!" *Fucking genius!!!* There are only 525, weird... So get it if you can, it's definitely worth it. (MB)
(Kremón)

V/A – "Brutality in Seconds" LP

The insert says "30 bands...40 blasts" and they aren't kidding. I love comps like this. Loaded with some of my current favorite bands, including MAMMOTH GRINDER, HUMMINGBIRD OF DEATH, KILL THE CLIENT, IN DISGUST, HATRED SURGE and a few others, plus a bunch of bands new to me. You can find all sorts of variations on grindcore, fastcore, hardcore and powerviolence. Some other bands that stood out were P.L.F., N.I.B.I.R.U., BATTLE RIFLE and ENDLESS DEMISE, but I liked almost every track. Run, don't walk, and pick this one up. (MH)
(Sick Thought)

V/A – "Punk Chartbusters Vol. 6" 2xCD

Compilations are always a dodgy/tricky proposition. Rare it is, indeed, that the ratio of good to mediocre (or worse: plain garbage) is high. And while they can serve as an introduction to more of the masses of the as-yet-unheard/underappreciated, they more likely add to the growing list of bands one wishes remained understandably obscure. And throwing the ol' cover versions into the mix adds a further wrinkle. A good cover, of course, should both celebrate the original and also add a little something. Otherwise, really, why not just stick to the previously known? All very existential, I know. But what it boils down to is that this comp—all covers, and not the first, I'll wager, given the numerology of the title—suffers from the worst of all aforementioned pitfalls: 48 bands I've never heard of before (not necessarily a bad thing, of course), largely German as far as I can ascertain (me, I'm biased towards that part of the world's punker output, given its previous track record), and even covering some classics that are rarely revisited (anyone remember FISCHER Z or KRAFTWERK?). With few exceptions, however, this is pretty dismal. It's difficult to fuck up NEIL YOUNG's opus "Keep on Rockin' in the Free World" (ably interpreted by DECEMBER PELA), and there's a surprisingly good take on an AMY WINEHOUSE ditty (provided by AND AFTER THE MOVEMENT), and the STONES' "Satisfaction" is actually improved upon (PUNK JONES)...but that's not really a good enough average for a two-disc set. Shame, really. (RK)
(Wolverine)

V/A – "Skins e Punks = TNT" CD

This is a reissue of a classic compilation EP originally released on NABAT's C.A.S. label to promote unity between the titular factions in an increasingly divided Italian punk scene. While I'm not sure it achieved its desired effect, it is a pretty fucking good record. DIOXINA opens with the weakest tracks. While "Siamo Noi" is catchy enough, their "reggae" track is eminently skipable. ARRM follows with another dire reggae song, but redeems themselves with a raging hardcore track that features one of the slickest solos in HC history. While I'm not an Oi fan as a rule, NABAT has always appealed to me, both due to their above-average songwriting and nasty guitar tone. Seriously, it sounds like the dude is playing on rusty strings with a razor blade. Finally, RAPPRESAGLIA fucking kill with two tracks that stand up to the early NEGAZIONE material (though with slightly less unhinged vocals). The packaging is an excellent reproduction of the original record cover and insert. This is well worth picking up. (AU)
(Ansaldi)

V/A – "This Is Peterborough Too!" CD

Regional compilations are almost always, by their very nature, a mixed bag; unless there's a specific scene around a particular genre in a geographical area, they are often an uneven listen. Still, for Peterborough, a relatively small city in Cambridgeshire, it's remarkable that they were able to stuff this CD with nineteen bands and none of them are out-and-out shit. There are representatives here of all the major genres of modern alternative rock, including lots of somewhat mediocre versions of whatever crap gets played on the radio, but also some fairly decent stabs at metal, emo, and indie pop. Readers of this magazine, I expect, will be most interested in hearing from DUN2DEF, AMO, and the DESTRUCTORS. Also worthy of note were PUNKY REBEL MEDIA (with the track "This Is Peterborough," which seemed to have been written expressly to appear on this album and deals with local politics) and the '20s-era jazz of the MALINGERERS. I'd like to note that the songs I enjoyed most on this appear to have been performed by the groups with the oldest members (at least going from the pictures in the booklet), which is sad state of affairs: perhaps the youth of Peterborough should give up trying to ape the latest *NME* cover stars. (AM)
(Rowdy Farrago, no info)

V/A – "When Energy Meets Attitude We Call It Punk" EP

A live compilation featuring THE VERNON WALTERS, SOULSIDE, SAMIAM and PASCOW. This is an EP that accompanied a photo book that I reviewed separately. Not a fan of live stuff, although THE VERNON WALTERS and PASCOW actually sound pretty damn good. The rest of the record is not too interesting for me. That said, if you are a die-hard fan and need everything by these bands, then go for it. (MS)
(Ox)

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Active Rebellion: www.activerebellion.com
Agony: www.downtoagony.com
Alerta Antifascista: www.no-pasaran.org
Alien Snatch: Danziger Strasse 1, 10435 Berlin, GERMANY, www.aliensnatch.com
All About: www.myspace.com/allaboutrecords
Alternative Tentacles: PO Box 419092, San Francisco, CA 94141, www.alternativetentacles.com
Always Never Fun: 70 Owen St., Newtown 6021, Wellington, NEW ZEALAND
Anarkopunx: www.freewebs.com/anarkopunxrecords
An'na Nadel: www.anr-music.org
Ansaldi: Via Sacco 14, 40127 Bologna, ITALY, www.ansaldirecords.com
Art of the Underground: artoftheunderground.com
Assassinators: www.myspace.com/assassinators
Automation: www.myspace.com/thearmc
Basement: www.basementrecords.net
Blackball: www.blackballrecords.com
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Bombed Out: PO Box 17, Leeds LS8 1UP, UK
Bones Brigade: www.bonesbrigaderecords.com
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Carlton: www.myspace.com/carltonrecords
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Classic Bar Music: 1323 1/2 Minna Street, San Francisco, CA 94103
Cockfight: 2456 23rd Ave. Pl NE, Hickory, NC 28601, cockfight-records@yahoo.com
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Crew for Life Europe: 6 Allee du Faneur, 77400 St. Thibault des Vignes, FRANCE
Criminal IQ: 3057 N Rockwell 2nd Floor, Chicago, IL 60618, www.criminaliq.com
Critical Convictions: myspace.com/criticalconvictions
Damaging Noise: POB 226720, Los Angeles, CA 90022
Deadlamb: www.deadlambrecords.com
Deer Healer: www.deerhealer.com
Decay: decaydudes@gmail.com
Deep Elm: www.deepelm.com
Deranged: 2700 Lower Road, Roberts Creek, BC V0N 2W4, CANADA, www.derangedrecords.com
Destroy Me: 131 Tompkins Ave. 2nd Fl., Brooklyn, NY 11206, destroymerecords.blogspot.com
Destructors: www.destructors.co.uk
Devil's Ruin: www.devilsruinrecords.com
Discos de Hoy: Calle 4, C-5 Parque Montebello, Trujillo Alto, PUERTO RICO 009876
Distorted Charly Brown: distortedcharlybrownrecords.bigcartel.com
Divergent Series: forkses@gmail.com
Dog Family: www.myspace.com/dogfamily
Douchemaster: www.douchemasterrecords.com
Drag City: www.dragcity.com
Drugged Conscience: 5140 Tamerind Ridge Dr Naples, FL 34119, www.druggedconscience.com
Faca Cega: fcdiscos@gmail.com
Fashionable Idiots: PO Box 580131, Minneapolis, MN 55458, www.fashionableidiots.com
Fat Wreck: www.fatwreck.com
FDH: www.fdhmusic.com
Feast of Tentacles: www.feastoftentacles.com
Feral Kid: www.myspace.com/feralkidrecords
Feral Ward: www.feralward.com
Financial Ruin: www.financial-ruin.com
Five Feet Under: www.5feetunder.com
Florida's Dying: www.fdrlabel.com
Flyswatters: www.myspace.com/theflyswattersmusic
Forcefield: PO Box 26946, Richmond, VA 23261
Full House: www.fullhouserecords.com
FYBS: www.fybsrecords.com
Gatehouse: www.gatehouseanchor.com
Geykido Comet: www.gcrecords.com
Gilead Media: PO Box 292, Oshkosh, WI 54901, www.gileadmedia.net
Give Praise: PO Box 494, Barnstable, MA 02630, www.givepraiserecords.com
Goner: www.goner-records.com
Grain Belt: PO Box 18620, Minneapolis, MN 55418, www.grainbeltrecords.com
Gssh Gssh: www.gsshgssh.com
Halo of Flies: www.haloofflies records.com
Halvfabrikat: Poppelgatan 6, S-385 32 Torsas, SWEDEN, www.halvfabrikat.net
Hanged Man: www.myspace.com/hangedmanrecords
HBSP-2X: www.hbsp-2x.com
Hear More: www.hearmorerecords.com
Heartless Robot: myspace.com/heartlessrobotproductions
Helltunes: 3409 Oaklawn, Victoria TX 77901
Hell Yes: hellyeshellyeshellyes.bigcartel.com
Holy Shit: 21 Harold Walk, Leeds LS6 1PS, UK
Hot Flowers: www.myspace.com/hotflower
Hyperrealist: PO Box 9313, Savannah, GA 31412, www.hyperrealist.com
IFB: c/o Nevin Marshall, 4447 St. Clair Ave., Fort Myers, FL 33903, www.ifbrecords.com
Intervention: www.interventionrecords.com
In the Red: PO Box 50777, Los Angeles, CA 90050, www.intheredrecords.com
Iron Lung: PO Box 95521, Seattle, WA 98149, ironlungrecords@hotmail.com
It's Alive: 11411 Hewes St, Orange, CA 92869, www.itsaliverecords.com
Jeetkune: www.myspace.com/jeetkunerecords
Jeth-Row: www.myspace.com/jethrowrecords
Joe Pogo: PO Box 281, East Syracuse, NY 13057, www.joepogorecords.com
Just A Audial: 2759 Crescent Street, Second Floor, Astoria, NY 11102
Just 4 Fun: www.j4f.dk
Keep Screaming: www.keepscreamingrecords.co.uk
Kranium: www.krnm.se
Kremón: www.kremonrecords.cjb.net
La Corde: www.myspace.com/lacordesf
Laja: www.laja.com.br
Lengua Armada: martincrudo@yahoo.com
Load: www.loadrecords.com
Local Cross: 1619 Commonwealth Ave. #2, Boston, MA 02135, www.localcross.com
Longshot Music: 980 Harrison St., San Francisco, CA 94107, www.longshotmusic.com
Loud Punk: PO Box 3067, Albany, NY 12203
Mala Raza: PO Box 6037, 50080 Zaragoza, SPAIN, www.malaraza.info
Massproduktion: Box 377, 851 06 Sundsvall, SWEDEN, www.massproduktion.com
MCR Company: 157 Kamiagu Maizuru Kyoto 624-0913 JAPAN
Moment of Collapse: www.momentofcollapse.com
Mope: www.mopeymumblemouse.com
Munster: www.munster-records.com
Muy Autentico: www.myspace.com/totallyoffical
Never Give Up: PO Box 436, Waldo, FL 32694
Night People: www.night-people.org
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Overdose On Records: PO Box 525, Fleetwood, PA, 19522, myspace.com/overdoseonrecords
Ox: Postfach 11 04 20, 42664 Solingen, GERMANY, www.ox-fanzine.de
Oxxon: www.oxxon.de
Parade of Spectres: Fam. Ludwig, 104 Birling Road, Ashford, Kent TN24 8BQ, UNITED KINGDOM, paradeofspectres.blogspot.com
Para Soniq: www.parae.org
Pasazer: www.pasazer.pl
Penguin Suit: PO Box 22083, Oakland, CA 94623
Plan-It-X: 1007 Washington Ave., Cairo, IL 62914, www.plan-it-x.com
Plastic Idol: www.plasticidolrecords.com
Prank: PO Box 410892, San Francisco, CA 94141, www.prankrecords.com
Profane Existence: PO Box 18051, Minneapolis, MN 55418, www.profaneexistence.org
Psychic Handshake: myspace.com/psychichandshake
Rabia Contra El Sistema: aly_punk@hotmail.com
Railroaded: 24 Delafield St. Apt. #2, New Brunswick, NJ 08901
Red Scare: www.redscare.net
Red Tornado: www.myspace.com/redtornadorecords
Residue: www.residue-records.com
Resurrection: POB 1690, San Juan Capistrano, CA 92673
Revista Prego: revistaprego.blogspot.com
Rinderherz: www.rinderherzrecords.com
Rockin' Dogs: 25 rue Bizet, 94800 Villejuif, FRANCE, www.myspace.com/rockindogs
Rock Mutante: rockmutantediscos@hotmail.com
Rock'n'Roll Disgrace: 24 Sadler Street, Lynn, MA 01905, www.rnrdisgrace.com
Rumble Fish: PO Box 69, 124482 Moscow, RUSSIA, www.rumblefish.ru
Sacred Bones: 144 N 7th St #413 , Brooklyn, NY 11211, www.sacredbonesrecords.com
Salinas: PO Box 2802, Detroit, MI 48202, www.salinasrecords.com
17 Television Records: 3031 E. 3rd St, Long Beach, CA, 90814
Shattered Thought: www.st-records.com
Shield: Blazoenstraat 32, 5021 DM Tilburg, NETHERLANDS, www.shieldrecordings.com
Sick Thought: trekbgh@yahoo.com
Six Feet Under: www.sixfeetunderrecords.com
Slumberland: www.slumberlandrecords.com
Solidarity: www.solidarityrecordings.com
Space Hearse: www.memphismorticians.bigcartel.com
St. Dad: PO Box 15013, Gainesville, FL 32604, stdadyouth.blogspot.com
Steve's Pizza and Records: stevespizzaandrecords@gmail.com
Sudden Death: PO Box 43001, Burnaby, BC V5G 3H0, CANADA
Sweet: www.myspace.com/sweetdiscos
Swiss Punk: www.swisspunk.ch
Taang: 3830 5th Avenue, San Diego, CA 92103, www.taang.com
Tadpole: tadpolerecords.blogspot.com
Teen Sound: www.mistylane.it
Telephone Explosion: 1077 Dundas St W, Toronto, ON M6J 1W9 CANADA
Thanks But No Thanks: tbntrecords@me.com
Tic Tac Totally: PO Box 558383, Chicago, IL 60655, www.tictactotally.com
To Live a Lie: www.tolivealie.com
Tor Johnson: www.torjohnsonrecords.com
Tsuguri: 2847 Doc Pugh Rd, Connelly Springs, NC 28612, tsugurirecords@yahoo.com
Twisted Chords: www.twisted-chords.com
Undislesssed: chaoshardcore.site.viola.fr
United Riot: www.unitedriotrecords.com
Vadamarah: www.thecomrades.com
Vegas: www.vegasrecords.net
Ventriculoperitoneal Sound: ventriculoperitonealsound.blogspot.com
Vertex: vertexaudio@gmail.com
Vex: www.myspace.com/vexrecords
Video Disease: 11029 E. Candor St., Cerritos, CA 90703
Viking on Campus: vikingoncampus.blogspot.com
Vinyl Rites: PO Box 924, Gainesville, FL 32602, www.vinylrites.net
Vitriol: vitriolrecords.bigcartel.com
White Mystery: www.whitemysteryband.com
Whoa Oh: www.whoaohrecords.com
Wolf Dog: www.wolfdogrecords.us
Wolverine: www.wolverine-records.de
World Funeral: 3429 15th Ave. S, Seattle, WA 98144
Zodiac Killer: www.zodiackiller.com

DEMOS

Send demos and CD-Rs to: MRR attn: Demos, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146. Please provide a postpaid price and a mailing address with your demo! Reviews by Robert Collins, xYosefx.

A.O.A. – Not the '80s anarcho band, silly, this A.O.A. is an all out Amish grindcore assault. Nonsensical noise grind mayhem like you might expect from AMISH ON ACID, shit-fi chaos to the fullest. (Robert) (8 song CDr/cassette, no lyrics, myspace.com/aoa2009).

AXEMAN – Fucking amazing shit here. As the name hints, this band worships at the altar of the mighty AMEBIX. AXEMAN isn't just a tribute band, though. These are finely honed songs, a perfect blend of AMEBIX with early black metal in the vein of BATHORY or HELLHAMMER. Part of the Black Twilight Circle out of LA, the membership overlaps with bands such as VOLAHN and ASHDAUTAS, who some readers might know from their US tour with BONE AWL. Next to VOLAHN's fantastic LP, this is probably my favorite release so far from this cult. My copy is hand-numbered out of 100 with a patch. I'm not sure if there is or will be another press. If perfectly crafted crust/metal piques your interest, hit them up now or cry later. (xYosefx) (3-song tape, lyrics included, crepusculonegro@live.com)

BLOOD THIRST SPIDER – "Rock'n'Roll Destruction" – Fukk Yes!!! Thailand punx deliver old school hardcore with sinister snarled vocals. The buzzsaw bass drives the whole band along, and there are some seriously demented and awesomely out of place guitar leads that make me just shake my head. Clean, almost surf guitars from time to time, and there are a couple of tunes that have a kind of old school R'n'R feel to them, like the good '80s So Cal bands did sometimes. This is badass, the demo comes with a sticker and a patch, and I suggest you fire off an email to them right away! (Robert) (6 song CDr, no lyrics, ed_rudy@yahoo.com)

COLD DEATH – These melodic guitars fall somewhere between SIGNAL LOST and PSYCHEDELIC FURS, while the vibe is total '80s goth/punk. COLD DEATH's songs are crafted perfectly, the kind of quality hooks that I could totally hear on the radio, but only if the radio were super awesome. Mid paced and dark punk from Germany, awesome shit! (Robert) (4 song cassette, lyrics included, Ruin Nation Records, PO Box 105824, 28058 Bremen, GERMANY, www.colddeath.net)

COLONIAL VIPERS – From the opening of the "I, Of The Viper," to the tune of the always smart to cover SURVIVOR tune (not really...seriously, don't ever cover that song), COLONIAL VIPER launch into a deluge of rants about allergies, weed, jerking off and loads of other important topics. ADRENALIN O.D. mentality, but unfortunately without the wit or the songwriting skills. (Robert) (13 songs, lyrics included, myspace.com/colonialvipers)

DOVE – This ain't really a demo, it's the cassette version of the killer record that Financial Ruin released this month, and for the review of that record please turn to the Record Review section (in brief though: heavy metallic stoner sludge that will appeal to fans of HIGH ON FIRE, TORCHE, KYLESA and the like, and it's really really fukkn' good). This release is all about the package: pro-printed tapes with two color J-cards and a ridiculous screen printed cardboard case to keep the whole thing in—suffice to say that you won't be losing this on the floor of your '83 Corolla. Collector fodder? Yeah, there's only 150 of these bad boys, but at least they did it right.... Financial Ruin indeed! (Robert) (18 song cassette, lyrics included, www.financial-ruin.com)

EUROTICS – Stylistically, this one is tough to nail down... EUROTICS songs are kinda garage punk, but the approach is all hardcore. Badly distorted guitars (distorted in the right bad way), reverbed vox and a ferocious drum attack make songs that might otherwise plod mundanely along seem pretty fukkn' exciting. "Psychopath" is an accidentally hip dark rocker, and "Stoned To Death" is a complete winner. I'm sold. (Robert) (6 song cassette, no lyrics, c/o Josh Phipps 1914 Parkwood Ave. 1st Floor, Richmond, VA 23220)

FOREIGN BODIES – Raspy, off kilter vocals and a weird recording keep this from sounding mundane, otherwise we are dealing with an attempt at something that falls between X, THE AVENGERS and PEDESTRIANS. Solid and tuneful punk from Montreal. (Robert) (4 song cassette, no lyrics, no contact info)

THE FUCKING COPS – Best or worst band name ever? This is like the melodic punk parts of a LEFTOVER CRACK show without the ska. Ever-present harmonizing vocals and professionally delivered guitar melodies all wrapped up in a package that would suit fans of AGAINST ME, WEAKERTHANS or the aforementioned squat rockers. You really couldn't ask for this kind of music to be crafted or delivered much better. (Robert) (4 song CDr, lyrics included, bigpurplerecords@gmail.com)

GOD EQUALS GENOCIDE – Rough female-fronted live punk shits. The vocals sound awesome, but I can't really tell much else about the band from the recording, which is a wash of cymbals and white noise. The break into jangly pop punk stuff a few times, but mostly this is fast, simple and furious. (Robert) (? song CDr, no lyrics, c/o Margin Youth, 5676 York Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90042)

GRAVEBOUND – Killer down-tuned powerviolence shits from Tennessee that will melt your brain. If you like to be crushed, then this will be your favorite tape this month. A touch of metal on the guitar—but it's always tasteful—devastating songs and vocals that are as anguished as they are angry. The slow will crush you, and the fast will kill you, and there's noise on the flip side. This rules hard. (Robert) (10 song cassette, lyrics included, $5ppd from 509 Hearthen Lane, Hixson, TN 37343, gravebound@gmail.com)

GROSS URGE – Most excellent retardocore from GROSS URGE on their demo titled "Special Cupcake (tape)." Super lo-fi childish nonsense along the lines of PISSED OFFICERS or SOCKEYE, but without the fury of the former or the secondary education of the latter. The liberal use of keyboards in a very preschool-esque manner really drives home the asinine nature of this tape, but when songs like "Sick Of It" kick in you realize that...actually you just realize that this is asinine. You love GROSS URGE or you hate it, but there are only 25 copies (I just checked online, as of today they have 5 left), so either way most of you will likely never hear it...whether that is a blessing or a source of frustration is up to you. (Robert) (? song cassette, no lyrics, $5 ppd from: 11951 Reagan St., Los Alamitos, CA 91720, babycarrotrecords.blogspot.com)

HAPPINESS – Midwest frustrato-core. I just made up that genre, feel free to apply it liberally to bands like HAPPINESS who attack their music with a ferocity reserved for true and honest inability to cope. This might get genre-fied as simple hardcore, or perhaps crust, when one hears the heavy blasting bits, but these tunes go deeper, and the guitar is totally damaged—that simple and repetitive bass is necessary to hold all this shit together. Great demo, might I suggest you get one for yourself? (Robert) (10 song cassette, lyrics included, c/o Nervous Laughter 24 Winners Cup Circle, Wheaton, IL 60189, myspace.com/happiness666)

HULK SMASH – I'm baffled by this, but I kinda love it. HULK SMASH cover SABBATH, KING CRIMSON, YES, IGGY POP, DOC DART and The People's Court theme and somehow turn it all into a relevant sounding punk disc. I am listening to it right now, and I'm still not really sure how they pull this shit off, but they turn what is obviously a joke into some seriously crucial jams... it's what might happen if KARP had tried something like this 15 years ago... but regardless it's awesome and heavy and I say well done. (Robert) (8 song CDr, no lyrics, www.hulksmash.org)

HWS – Slick and polished melodic rock club punk ready for hot prime time airplay on MTV Europe, there's even a photocopied super punk looking promo photo. Look for them playing first on a package tour at your local rock club... or fuck man, maybe they'll even be headlining? I'll be at the punk show instead, so please let me know how the show went. (Robert) (13 song CDr, lyrics included, myspace.com/hwspunkrock)

IMODIUM – Nasty punk rock'n'roll from France with plenty of 'whooooa-oohs' and a few ska parts. Like OFFSPRING, but from Nieces (or some other town in France). (Robert) (6 song CDr, lyrics included, no contact info)

JOHNNY ROASTBEEF – Slick and produced commercial punk rock. There's a DEAD MILKMEN cover, but they made "Punk Rock Girl" sound like a WEIRD AL parody tune, sorry dudes, but everything about this demo seems like it wants to exist in a world far, far from this magazine. (6 song demo, lyrics included, myspace.com/jroastbeef)

LARMO CUSACK – Slick and polished, but still raw and unrefined somehow—how does that work? This is like '90s Merge records all over again, but courtesy of

one dude in his bedroom. Garage-ish rock'n'roll with light punk sprinkles. (Robert) (10 song CDr, no lyrics, myspace.com/larmocusack)

LUNCH – French melodic punk rock. Lots of Fat Wreck style backing vocals, Warped Tour ready. (4 song CDr, no lyrics, www.lunchlunch.fr)

MANUAL ZOMBIE – Just look at that band name again and tell me you aren't intrigued. The music is as weird as the moniker...dark and haunting tunes that plod eerily along and take up almost an hour of your evening. I feel dirty, but strangely soothed... and there's a lot of harmonica, but it totally works. MANUAL ZOMBIE is a one-man band from Brooklyn, and apparently this was his 5th album length release of 2009... strangest demo this month by far, but I'm pretty sure I like it. (Robert) (17 song CDr, no lyrics, myspace.com/manualzombie)

THE MARK SPARKLES – Right out of the gate, I can't hear anything but AGAINST ME, with the raspy gang vocals and the midtempo, unabrasive song structure. Next tune and we're on to some more rocking shit, but with the same vibe: catchy upbeat bouncy melodic punk. If you dig the aforementioned AGAINST ME and SCREECHING WEASEL (who's killer "El Mozote" is given the treatment by THE MARK SPARKLES on this tape) then this shit is up your alley. (Robert) (7 song cassette, no lyrics, c/o Erica Brunner, 2923 Franklin Ave. East Apt. B, Seattle WA 98102, ericab6@u.washington.edu)

MATA MATA – Even a casual *MRR* reader has likely gathered by now that we at MRRHQ are big fans of the Silenzio Statico tape label and the associated scene that's kicking in LA right now. MATA MATA is their latest installment, and this time the kids have amped the intensity WAY the fuck up with the inclusion of ASHDAUTAS/AXEMAN/BONE AWL alumnus Eddie killing the guitar in the name of metallic crust. Phil's vocals are straight CRUCIFIX era pain and despair, while the rhythm section fucking charges forward like there is a battalion of unarmed cops in their path, ready to get their asses wasted by The Punx. Dust off your studded jacket (or at least go get one) and get into MATA MATA, totally amazing old school crust punk attack. (Robert) (7 song cassette, lyrics included, myspace.com/rawponxla)

MDK – Sometimes I really wish I could show you these tapes to really get the full effect of what we reviewers are dealing with. MDK's tape cover looks like a 15 year old stoner went nuts in shop class and then ran the shit over to his buddy with a computer to slap the logo on top. 'Hail Satan" is hand scrawled on the inside with some '666's and a pentagram and "MDK IS GOD" across the top. I am not doubting that MDK are indeed God. So the experience goes like this: I fall in love with the whole aesthetic, then I put the tape in and cross my fingers.... 100% Bedroom Metal. Over affected everything, pointless solos that come out of nowhere, just a complete nonsensical assault on everything you know about music. The bass reminds me of the band BOWEL, but for the purpose of actually trying to convey what MDK sound like that is a completely pointless comparison. Tons of reverb on the vocals, song structure that defines logic (when it is discernible, that is). This totally rules, and I wish I had heard it when I was 14. (Robert) (? song cassette, no lyrics, myspace.com/resurrectionrecords666)

MINDLESS – The folks at Financial Ruin are not fucking around. MINDLESS are devastatingly heavy fastcore/grind with Faiza from HATRED SURGE on vocals. This is some terrifying and essential shit, get into it. "Truth is lies/Lies is truth/But scum is still scum." (Robert) (6 song cassette, lyrics included, www.financial-ruin.com)

THE MINUS LOW FI – Italian garage rock'n'roll... kinda surf, kinda punk, kinda garage, all low fi as shit with swingin' vocals. They sent in two discs, one with four songs, one with two... I suggest you have them rip the shit onto one... less plastic, ya dig? (Robert) (6 song CDrx2, no lyrics, c/o Giovanni Elia, Perbellini, Vicolo Case Rotte 2, 37129 Verna ITALY)

MOLOCH – Southern sludge/doom in the vein of EYEHATEGOD or the slow BRAINOIL riffs, but these kids come from the UK. Positively crushing in every sense of the word, the perfect soundtrack to a night drive across the desert. Downtuned and painstakingly slow crust, they don't stray far from the formula, but instead they perfect it... and maybe borrow a BUZZOVEN riff in one song, but it's from the unreleased BUZZOVEN record, so I'm gonna give 'em the benefit of the doubt and say that maybe they wrote the shit themselves. (Robert) (8 song cassette, no lyrics, www.feastoftentaclesrecords.com)

THE MO'ODDS – Kinda funny that THE MO'ODDS directed their introduction letter to "Dear Sirs" since all 3 coordinators here are women. Whoops. Total blues based '50s rock'n'roll from Los Angeles, like THE BELL RAYS, but way more DIY sounding. Killer soulful vocals with female backups. (Robert) (4 song CDr, no lyrics, myspace.com/themoodds)

MOURNING – Well played melodic pop punk with a really commercial approach. Meandering guitar leads followed by palm muted build ups and wailing vocals pining on about love and relationships. I think that a lot of kids in the sticks think this is hardcore, but it sounds like mainstream alternative rock to me. (Robert) (4 song cassette, lyrics included, www.raiseyourfistrecords.com)

THE NAKED HEROES – Guitar/drum duo from New York that came to us from a faux major label. They sent a promo bullshit letter with it that makes me hate this shit before I press play, but imagine my surprise when I hear these tunes. Not only do THE NAKED HEROES fucking rule ass ultra hard, but the promo bullsheet actually nails their sound: "influences ranging from BLACK SABBATH and THE CRAMPS to JOHN LEE HOOKER and JAMES BROWN, this is ass shaking, head bangin, soul redeeming rock 'n'roll." It's not often that I'm at a loss for words, but I couldn't describe THE NAKED HEROES any better, and the shit is super good. (Robert) (9 song CDr, no lyrics included, www.powerloadrecords.com)

NERVOUS SEX – This sounds like it was recorded in a basement, but with a bunch of fancy noisemakers and keyboards to make it all sound extra shitty and extra cool. Raw as shit noise drenched art punk from Philadelphia, kinda rules. Imagine THE VSS all abrasive and noisy and without the hooks. (Robert) (6 song CDr, no lyrics, nervoussexband@gmail.com)

NEW CREASES – Super catchy male/female vocal punk. There's a lot of this disc that makes me picture them as a band that is going for the punk version of the big time, but then the vocals kick in and I think "THIS IS MY FIST are even catchier than NEW CREASES, and they are punk as shit!" And then I go back to dancing my little demo dance. Great stuff from Ohio, also the JAWBREAKER cover kinda rules. (Robert) (5 song CDr, lyrics included, myspace.com/newcreases)

NIGHTGAUN – Holy balls man, chaos punk terror in three movements!! This shit sounds like a hardcore mess recorded in a tunnel with werewolves lurking in the shadows lapping up puddles of broken '40s. Clean but fukkd sounding guitars that really don't mix at all with the rest of the mix... come to think of it, nothing in this mix makes much sense at all, especially the vocals which come at you from every direction. Imagine a demo quality LEBENDEN TOTEN, but playing straight UK82 mixed with US hardcore. These dudes are gonna be fukkn' great, plus their name is funny. (Robert) (3 song cassette, no lyrics, nightgaun82@gmail.com)

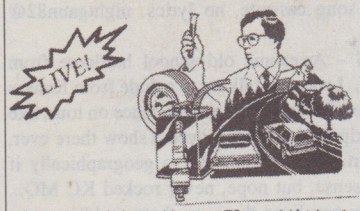
NO CLASS – Awesome old school hardcore from Kansas City... I was just talking to a dude from Kansas City about how I always skipped the place on tour, like for years I skipped it. Never played a show there ever, and I'm from fukkn' Oklahoma so geographically it makes total sense, but nope, never rocked KC MO... ever. And my pop lives there, so that would be even MORE reason to play there, but I've just never known of The Punx there, so I skipped it. Well anyway, this dude tells me that it's pretty crackin' these days, and if this damned NO CLASS demo is any indication, he's sure as shit right! Come to think of it, he might have even said he was in this band, but honestly I'm not sure because I forget shit all the fukkn' time, like I probably won't even remember the dude the next time I see him even though he was super nice and is pals with my buddy Joe... I just have a really shitty memory all the way around. And I don't even smoke weed. See, look at that, I nearly forgot I was reviewing A FUCKING KILLER HARDCORE CASSETTE (actually, to be honest, I wasn't reviewing it at all, I was just typing a bunch of bullshit you likely don't give a shit about)!! NO CLASS blast through 9 hardcore future anthems (ten if the intro counts, but I don't think it does, so we'll call it nine), it's heavy but there's none of that little dick/big amp shit going on, the songs are just burly as shit, and I can imagine blood at the shows - blood from frustration and intensity, not from fighting. I bet these dudes aren't into fighting. Stomp around the room kind of hardcore... like NEGATIVE APPROACH, but recorded better. Forgive me, but I believe this is already sold out.... you lose, but they'll give you the 1s and 0s version for free if you got a computer. Quality shit that I just ruined a review of... sorry dudes. (Robert) (9 song cassette, lyrics included, thewayyoutreatme.blogspot.com)

NO MORE SAINTS – The vocalist nails AUS ROTTEN era Dave Trenga, and mixed with NO MORE SAINTS' catchy Southern California politically fueled punk it works really well. No frills here, just punk. Like a rock'n'roll tinged BORN DEAD, good stuff. (Robert) (6 song CDr, lyrics included, $5ppd from Jim Alfaro, 63 Pico Plaza #246, San Clemente, CA 92672)

OUTDATES – Quality pop punk in the truest sense of the word. Great hooks, J CHURCH style sung vocals, super short to the point songs, and slightly sloppy/all heart delivery. (Robert) (6 songs, lyrics included, c/o Schlitztones, 64 Riverside Dr., Northampton, MA 01060)

PINE AWAY – This demo languished in the review box for a couple of months with a note warning: NO HARDCORE DUDES. Well—you see—for better or worse, the majority of the demo reviewers here are dudes, and I believe that all of us are into hardcore. Personally, I like hardcore A LOT, but with an open mind I took this lonely demo home, determined to give it a fair listen. And after that listen, I have no idea what PINE AWAY were worried about... putting aside what I listen to by choice in my daily life, these songs are fucking great. Super clean (and dare I say pretty?) punk that isn't quite pop, certainly not emo or indie... it probably sits closer to the late '80s alternative rock that I cut my teeth on than most of the stuff in this issue of *MRR*, but that's the world where I discovered the music that makes me get up in the morning, so that's putting PINE AWAY in pretty good company. Maybe I lose some hardcore points for liking this, but I figure I've got a few to spare. (Robert) (4 song cassette, lyrics included, pineaway.bandcamp.com)

HOTTER THAN A CROTCH



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ZINES

Send zines for review to: MRR, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146. Please include the following info on a separate piece of paper with your zine: postpaid price, international price, do you take trades?, size, copied or printed?, number of pages, language, mailing address, website address, email address.

Reviews by:
(DA) Diane Anastasio **(JD) Judy Balmin** **(MB) Mariam Bastani** **(JB) Julia Booze** **(LG) Layla Gibbon** **(BG) Bob Goldie** **(MM) Marissa Magic** **(JM) Jeff Mason** **(CR) Casey Ress** **(DS) Dionne Stevens** **(VX) XYosefX**

(A)FOLK #3 / $2
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 28 pgs
You know those Magic Eye thingys from the '90s? Where if you stare at them long enough they supposedly become 3D? I belong to a group of people filed under "cross-eyed" and I could never be in on the joke. This zine is like those pictures. Except I think I get it this time around. Surreal sounds too official so I will say that the writing is intentionally fantastical, but self-aware, like it was Twittered before it was printed, obsessed with conspiracies and pizza. Lots of made up stories and maybe some truth seeping in from somewhere? Feels like drugs? (JB)
drudge@gmail.com
magicmuscle.wordpress.com

ANARCHIST AGAINST THE WALL one-shot / donation
8.25 x 5.75 – copied – 36 pgs
Anarchists Against the Wall centers around an Israeli activist group that this benefit compilation/zine is named after. These folks risk their life—and in the case of one of the interviewees, an eye—for the cause of Palestinian justice. The background reading and compelling interviews with a few members make this worth the price of admission alone. But this is only half of what you get because there are also two CD's jam-packed with anarchist punk and hardcore bands from around the world (21 countries) that have contributed material. The second half of the zine consists of lyrics and graphics covering all of the 58 bands, which include Attentat Sonore, Active Slaughter, Otan, Broken Minds, and many others. You have a choice of either English or French when you order a copy of this so be sure to specify; and although the price is undetermined as a donation, I would send at least a few Euros to cover the postage and materials alone, never mind the money needed for the cause. A cool comp for an excellent cause. (BG)
Paco / BP 41 436 / 21014 / Dijon / FRANCE / bubbledog@riseup.net

BIG HANDS #8 / $3
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 68 pgs
This huge thing is filled with writing, devoid of almost any type of graphic design. It's kinda typical "punk writer" style, reminding me of older *Burn Collectors* with the recurring themes of angst, hopelessness, and an apathetic sort of despair. The first piece bemoans the inability of the writer, or anyone he knows, to do constructive work because the lure of various websites is too strong. In another story, a lady used to be punk but now she makes big money in New York. The editor doesn't work, he just walks around. Inspired by him, the lady quits her job, then changes her mind when offered a huge raise. Other tales of social and cultural criticism appear. The writing is pretty consistent from previous issues, so if you liked it before, there's a new one out. I'm not particularly engaged by it. (JM)
Aaron Lake Smith / 1104 Imperial Rd. / Cary, NC 27511

CHAOTIC'S REVENGE #6 / **PLOPPY PANTS** #10
6 x 8.5 – copied – 40 pages
This is a split zine. One side of it is *Ploppy Pants* and the other is *Chaotic's Revenge*, however, they are both crust lifestyle interest zines. *Ploppy Pants* is definitely a keeper. The author sarcastically apologizes to whiners that the pages aren't filled with "anarchist theories and vegan recipes" and thanks to him for that cuz that sounds fucking boring and typical. I am very pleased to read his interpretations of the body language of people that pass him by when he's hitchhiking (he offers a description, explanation, and diagnosis—funny) and he provides a recipe for a successful crust band, which includes lots of dreadlocks and at least one fishing vest. I might be laughing too hard as a non-crust person, but hey, funny is funny. I think it's worth getting this issue just to be able to stare at the photo of the author on the cover. He's shirtless, dread-muletted, looks like a mutt who's been through many battles, and he's wearing a bemused smirk that looks sublimely boozy. Priceless. I'm sure the interviews with The Stilletoes and Drunken Bastards are great too. The *Chaotic's Revenge* side is not quite as hilarious, but features a lengthy list of hardcore bands in the Philippines with contact info, interviews with bands and SWOMP (a group of off-the-grid squatters in Amsterdam), and a vegan recipe for tortilla de patatas. The confusing bit about this is the illustrated "7 Deadly Squatter Sins" section, which condemns predictable misdeeds such as eating meat and watching TV, but also stinky clothes?? I think I might be misunderstanding something. Deal with it, sister! It

comes with the territory.
(JD)
maritisdenaam@hotmail.com

CIUTAT PODRIDA #9 / 4 Euros $5 world Trades by request
6 x 8.5 – printed – 64 pgs – Spanish

I have to say that Spain in general is kicking ass in their punk zine production. This is the ninth installment of a killer zine from Zaragoza, Spain that is very similar in lay out of the magazine you are holding in your hand right now! It's packed with both international and local interviews, including Sotatila, Mob 47, Bad Brains, Antimaster, Velocidad Absurda and more. They cover metal and punk of all kinds. There is a zine review section of Spanish language zines (y si hablas español debes de comprar esta zine para encontrar otras zines en español!) and an impressively large record reviews section. My favorite things in this are a retrospective of '90s punk/thrash bands that have been long forgotten and a column from their killer columns section by Jaume called Reich 'n' roll about sketchy bands and why listening to Skrewdriver as a punk fucking sucks (can I get a fuck yeah?). I dig this zine. The contributors put a ton of work into it and it definitely shows. (MB)
Jaume Esteve / PO Box 6129 / 50080 Zaragoza / Spain / ciutatpodrida@gmail.com / ciutatpodrida.blogspot.com

DARLENE ROCKNROLL FANZINE #4 / $1 or Trade
5.5 x 4.25 – copied – 36 pgs
When I saw Andrew WK listed in the cover of this zine, I was like "WTF?" but seriously, it works out... This zine starts out as a personal (perzine, sort of) account of the authors journey through his musical history, including some funny yet embarrassing moments that we can all relate to: not knowing the cool current band, not ever hearing the knowing the origin of the classics, both as a result of the obsessive music archivist focusing on one band at a time. Our author Randy also harps on something I also hate, the use of "post" before everything and coins a new term, PSPA. Post-Scenester, Pseudo-audiencism, describes the station of the older punk who has moved to a non-urban place, a real job and relies on the internet to hook them up for good music. This is followed by cool You Tube videos to check out and some short interviews with a few bands. My favorite are the kooky illustrations and the "Two Questions" interviews, in which Andrew WK fits in. It's a funny zine and a good read, especially for us aging punk. Don't know if the kids would be into it, but if they survive punk, this is like reading the future. (MB)
Randy Spaghetti / PO Box 3331 / Hayden, ID 83835 darlenezine@yahoo.com

DISTORT #27 / $?
8.27 X 11.69 [A4] – printed – 12 pgs
Distort is, without a doubt, the preeminent hardcore/punk/rock fanzine of our time. Anyone who says differently is a filthy fucking liar. There is not a single zine within this interconnected series of subgenres that is better written, better produced or anywhere near as consistent. Now, you may not agree with all of Daniel's musical tastes and opinions—I don't—but his passion shines through in his writing, and it's infectious. Almost infectious enough to make me want to buy a Billy Bao record. I do not like that band, but *Distort* makes me wish I did, makes me wish I could get what he gets from it. Personally, I liked the bands he featured in the early issues more, and I'll always love the music he covered in *We Want the World and We Want It on Fire* and the last issues of *No Longer Blind*. Along with Aaron Cometbus, Al Burian and *MRR*'s own *enfant terrible* Brace Belden, DX is one of our best writers, and we should appreciate that. But enough of the sycophancy, I'm writing a review here. The issue I'm holding features material that has mostly appeared previously in the author's column in this very zine. Along with a short Invasion interview, there are reviews and writings on a whole host of other international acts, including the Anals and the aforementioned Billy Bao. As usual, this issue is brilliant and far too short. Write for subscription info, it's worth every penny. (VX)
DX / PO Box 239 / North Carlton, VIC 3054 / Australia
distorttheworld@gmail.com

EAST VILLAGE INKY #43 / $3
5.5 x 4.25 - copied - 38 pgs
And I repeat: I DON'T FUCKING CARE. (MM)
East Village Inky c/o Ayun Halliday / PO Box 22754 / Brooklyn, NY 11202

EARTH FIRST! Vol. 30 No. 3 / $4.50
11 x 17 – printed – 32 pgs
The editors of this issue of *Earth First!* have compiled articles on some crucial recent land struggles, as well as world-wide efforts at dismantling and challenging colonization and racist border laws. There is a piece about the California Valley Miwok Tribe occupying buildings in Stockton, an interview with Juliet Belmas, who was imprisoned in 1983 for her involvement in groups such as Direct Action and the Wimmin's Fire Brigade, and an interview with Franklin Lopez, who is collaborating with Derrick Jensen on a new film called *End:Civ* (sic). It's got all of this, plus the usual "Frontlines" section, which lays out a smattering of briefs about environmental justice movements and actions across the globe, as well as, letters to the editor, the Earth First! Seasonal Calendar, and Green Scare Updates. Overall, this is a pretty informative and engaging issue of the collectively-run environmental justice rag. (DA)

Earth First / PO Box 3023 / Tucson, AZ 85702 / www.earthfirstjournal.org

EQUALIZING-X-DISTORT Vol. 10 #1 – $?
8.5 x 11 – copied – 16 pgs.
It's always pleasant to find another issue of this zine in my review box, or anywhere really. While this started out as a sort of newsletter for the Toronto-based radio show of the same name it has evolved into its own entity. Like many readers, I'm sure, I actually discovered the show through the zine rather than the other way around. Following the usual format, this issue opens with a long interview, this time with Edmonton punkers Let's Dance. Next is a transcript of a 1987 interview with SNFU, illustrated with some classic flyers. This is definitely the highlight of the issue for me, it's a damn good read. After this you can find the usual music, book and zine reviews. This issue came with an attached plea for financial help, as apparently the radio show needs to get more folks to donate to the listener-sponsored station (CIUT 89.5 FM, www.ciut.fm) to help meet operating expenses and ensure that they stay on the air. I'm not sure what the situation will be by the time this goes to press, but you can check out the above website for details. (VX)
21 Foundry Avenue Unit 5 / Toronto, ON / M6H 4K7 / Canada

THE FURY #18 / $4
8 x 11 – printed – 128 pgs
This is a super thick and great looking fanzine from Chicago. It starts out with an interview with Dez Cadena, most known for his work with Black Flag, which is what most of the talk focuses on, though the first section is about some sort of package tour which featured two Misfits and two former Flag members performing both bands songs. For some reason that really depressed me... There are reprinted interviews, one from 1990 with Nation of Ulysses from *Interobang!* Sharon Cheslow's zine, and another with Antioch Arrow both of which totally made me nostalgic for zines I read as a teenager like *Germ of Youth* and *Fenceclimber*. 97 Shiki write about their tour of South East Asia, which sounds amazing, and there's a great piece by Bill Daniel about punk photography, and a piece about Pettibon's artwork too. There's so much to read in here, much more than that list of interviews and articles, and the layout is great. I would recommend sending off for this. It reminded me somewhat of classic hardcore zines from the '90s, shit like *Change* or *Second Nature*, not in terms of the perspective/editorial content but just the way the thing looked. This has a clear, compelling, imaginative graphic style, and the fact that there's just so much to read—a ton of interviews, a huge review section, lots of different perspectives... (LG)
Mark Novotny / 5413 6th Ave / Countryside, IL 60525

LIKE A BOWLING BALL THROUGH THE DOOR part I / $3
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 92 pgs
Sadly, this is exactly the kind of writing that I believe belongs on the internet. Not because I do not believe in zines, nor that I think the internet is bad, not that at all, but because of its hankering for simplicity, questions that are downright obvious, graphic nothingness, and membership to specific groups of people who care about the detailingest details. I mean, the people who want to read this want to be able to do so instantly and while also looking at other stuff simultaneously. It goes on forever, consists almost entirely of interviews that were previously published and are not the most interesting unless you know the bands, or are into reading fairly awkward and broken conversations that you weren't there for. There is a fair balance of gender representation at least in the selection of bands, which are, for example, The Ataris, Hunchback, the Unlovables, Used Kids, Chinese Telephones, Affirmative Action Jackson, and so on. (JB)
JEEvansIII@gmail.com

LOSERDOM #20 / $? Or trade
8 x 4.5 – printed – 56 pgs
Loserdom is a long running punk zine straight outta Ireland that always makes for an entertaining read. They are community, punk and bike fixated, which I assume is a description that fits most of the readers of *MRR*... There's a piece about an attempt at getting their local food co-op to boycott Israeli produce after the strikes on the Gaza Strip last year, which looks into the issue at hand, but is also a window into how group dynamics work. My favorite thing was this great interview with Darcy Alexandra, who helps run a story telling project for refugees and undocumented people stuck in the dismal lurch that is asylum seeking. It was really interesting, the questions were perceptive and the work that FOMACS do is inspiring. I also liked an interview that focused on a zine library in France. There's writing from a recently graduated high school student on the miseries of group dynamics at an all girl school, a piece on winter swimming in the ocean, 7"s found at thrift stores... As always *Loserdom* is an engaging and informative read, the writers all have distinctive and appealing voices and they are able to get across the feeling that Dublin has an active and excellent punk scène. Recommended! (LG)
www.loserdomzine.com

MAKE A MESS #2/ $2
8.5 x 11 – copied – 48 pgs
Make A Mess is the name of a local record label run by an *MRR* shitworker that puts out everything from Grass Widow to Brilliant Colors and the Traditional Fools. This zine is reflective of Eric's involvement in the San Francisco music community and his diverse taste in music. There's an interview with my current favorite local band Rank/Xerox, but the zine is filled mostly with a ton of band photos, taken mostly at house shows, Gun Outfit, Tyvek, Wild Thing, Complications... There are a bunch of rad flyers from local shows, and the bands that got their own photo page also have reproduced lyric sheets, which I liked. This is an awesome project, it really seems like the work of someone super psyched on punk, on music, on good times. The photos are great... Get it or regret it. (LG)
Makeamessrecords.bigcartel.com

THE MATCH #108 / $ or stamps donation
9.5 x 6.75 – printed – 76 pgs
I was excited to see this in my review box because this is easily one of my favorite zines around and each issue is packed with hours and hours of entertaining, intelligent, and informative reading. Most zines I sort of read/skim through and then give them

away, but *The Match* stays in my bag for weeks as my reading material for when I'm riding the bus or eating lunch at work. Each issue has a variety of critical writings addressing religion, authoritarianism of all kinds, and just the general ridiculousness of mainstream society. This issue, of which I'm only skimming through for the review so I can take my time to read the whole thing later, has essays titled "Adventures in Office Work" and "Emasculated by a Female Surgeon" (regarding the nightmare of a wrongful surgery pushed by the medical industry); but the essays are only a small part of what makes this zine so interesting—it's the short articles, letters from readers, and other tidbits scattered about that make up the bulk of the matter. An amalgamation of material penned by the editor (who's been doing this for over forty years) and contributions from likeminded writers, *The Match* is utterly indispensable and highly recommended. (BG)
PO Box 3012 / Tucson, AZ 85702

PEOPS #4 + 5 / $4 US, $5 world
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 24 pgs
Well you've seen these, as one appears every month (yeah!) in the columns here in *MRR*. Fly does a great job with these and it's pretty amazing to read about the projects these freaks/radicals are working on. My criticism is that they do look a better on an 8.5 x 11 page than with this smaller format. There is a Peops website, and there'll be another book soon, so these zines aren't your only option for checking them out. They are fucking rad, so be sure to see 'em one way or another. (JM)
Fly / PO Box 1318 / Cooper Stn / NYC, NY 10276 / www.peops.org

PLEASE LET ME HELP / $2?
5.5 x 7 – printed – 78 pgs
Contained in this collection are 26 letters addressed to various organizations and individuals with "helpful" advice, each of which the author is willing to assist in. To sweeten the deal, he includes a "complimentary vampire" with each letter. Among the highlights are his suggestions to Levi Strauss to hire him to cut the lower leg from jeans in order to make pants that don't make the wearer too hot, an offer to Hulk Hogan to write a screenplay in which he would portray Christopher Columbus, and a suggestion that Dunkin' Donuts hire him to make toast at one of their locations. It's a pretty funny collection of letters ostensibly written by a nutcase who is unemployed, has recently gone through a divorce and lives with his mother, though the scary thing is I've read letters like his that are real and just as fucking nutty. A pretty good read with at least a few chuckles and even a chortle or two. (CR)
PO Box 22883 / Oakland, CA 94609
draw56@hotmail.com

RAZORCAKE #55 / $4
8.5 x 11 - printed - 112 pgs
Eddy Current is on the cover. There is a kind of rad interview with Jay Reatard interviewing himself from when he's a teenager (rad in the sense of pop artifact rather than content) and a big ol' thing on Bruce Moreland. Pretty rad issue.(MM)
PO Box 42129 / Los Angeles, CA 90042

SMILE HON, YOU'RE IN BALTIMORE! THE SEX ISSUE / $5
5.5 x 8.5 – printed – 79 pages
Lurid smut. Scads of it. Poems, true personal accounts, erotica, and some fictional nonsense that I totally call BS on. There are about 40 varied contributions all on the sex theme. Even if (the crassly pen-named) Anal Roberts did used to get a lot of play from slutty blondes that would wait for his incredible penis on the hood of his car till he got out of work at the metal bar, I really don't want to hear about it. That is ridiculous. I say no horny busty blondes for him, because he wants them too bad. But I did enjoy reading about one lady discovering her foot fetish, another woman developing a deeply satisfying platonic, snuggling relationship with her best friend, and another one about one sorrowful guy who learned to "wrap it before you tap it" the hard way. This issue is laid out super proper with a fancy computer program and it's full of indecent photos mostly of naked ladies with tattoos.(JD)
wpt@eightstonepress.com
Eight-Stone Press / PO Box 11064 / Baltimore, MD 21212

A SOUTHERN SUN TO LIGHT THE WAY / $?
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 116 pgs
This is actually a novella in zine form, bound only with a rubber-band. Inside these 116 pages of dense writing are short stories about the author's experiences traveling through Latin America. The author states early on his admiration for magical realist authors like Bolano and Garcia Marquez, and their influences certainly show in his writing. He melds depictions of his experiences with histories of the regions and the indigenous people who inhabit the lands he encounters, as well as, political commentary on the oppression of these communities by local governments. I generally have a strong aversion to travel narratives, especially when they are written by men, but if you are interested in DIY radical politics and social movements in Latin America, you will most likely take a lot from this zine. (DA)
Downbound Train Publications c/o Mike Schake / 63 Highland Rd. / Hackettstown, NJ 07840 / forceforchange@yahoo.com

STAINED SHEETS #3.1 / $?
8 x 11 – copied – 32 pgs
Australia really has the world beat in terms of zines. A lot of that has to do with the influence of Daniel Stewart—*MRR's* "All Foreign Junk" columnist and maker of the epic myth making *Distort* zine. He is involved with this publication too, though there are about five other names on the masthead. This is a great zine. There's a uniform aesthetic throughout, really clean and basic with lots of thick black lines, which gives it a both post punk and hardcore feel somehow... The zine has a fine selection of vintage material, my favorite part was the Venom P. Stinger retrospective, the interview with the Traitors was pretty great too. There are a huge amount of interviews with current bands as well, so this doesn't come across as a "good ol' days" receptacle. From one of the seeming endless array of Fucked Up side projects, The Bitters (favorite line? "I'm talkin' sexy moves with babes, legit lover style to some real bangin' tracks") through to Modern Convenience, Tough Troubles to Cock Safari. All of the conversations were interesting, even if I didn't give a shit about the band being talked to. This is a traditional music zine, but one done very well. (LG)
stainedcircles@gmail.com
totalscummaterial@gmail.com

SIX TWO FIVE

OUT SPRING/SUMMER 2010

QUATTRO STAGIONI - LP
Crazed 1000mph German fastcore!

SOCIETY OF FRIENDS - COLL CD
Long awaited CD of TX Prog-violence

V/A-Bay Area Thrash Detonation
3rd CD comp of NorCal fastcore

YOUNG OFFENDERS/GIANT HAYSTACKS
Split 12"LP-anthemic angry post-punk

FLAT OUT - Debut EP
Debut-650/Bay Area Blasting Fastcore

INSECT WARFARE - 1-Sided 12"LP
Crazed-noise-blast.The last recording

SFN - New EP
Midwest powerviolence-the new generation

GET DESTROYED! - Last EP
The final recording of this AZ blast-unit

INFANTICIDE - EP
Straight-forward,no-BS Swedish grind

FLIPOUT AxAx - Flipout CD
Classic Tokyo HC/Thrash-punk.Ex-LIE

DISCARGA - 3rd CD
NEW! 18-songs of highspeed thrash

RUNNING FOR COVER - LP
All hail 1000mph powerviolence

THE PROCESS - Debut CD
Punishing HC ala RINWORM, X-SHANK

INFECT - Discography CD
Cult,all female thrash from Brazil

AGENTS OF ABHORRANCE - CD
Crazed Aussie 3-man blurrcore

THREATENER - Discography CD
Coll.CD of 1000mph blasting fastcore

BREAKfAST/STRUGGLE4PRIDE-CD
Tokyo cult skate thrash

PLUS A TON MORE STUFF COMING!

STILL AVAILABLE:

TRAPPED IN A SCENE CD- Comp of pure blast
IRON LUNG-1st CD Crazy-two-man blurrcore
SLIGHT SLAPPERS-2nd LP Tokyo violence
ATHRENODY CD Early 90s Death/Grindcore
BANDANOS/DESTRUCT.END-CD:Crossover-Thrash
CHARM/UG MAN-Split LP:Tokyo thrashcore
CRUCIAL SECTION/HIT ME BACK-EP:Int'l HC
KUNGFU RICK - Disco 2xCD:Insane grind/HC
IRON LUNG/SHANK LP/CD-Audio Brutality
BREAKFAST 2nd LP:Tokyo skate-thrash
SECOND OPINION - CD High Energy thrash
BARBARIC THRASH CD COMPS:Euro,CaliComps
CRUCIAL SECTION-LP: 80s RIPCORD-thrash
SHANK-LP/CD: 1000mph power violence
MACHINEGUN ROMANTICS-CD: TX fastcore
QUILL/I DONT CARE-Split CD:Tokyo thrash
APARTMENT 213-CD:Clevo power violence
HE WHO CORRUPTS CD: Corporo-grind-o-caust
SCHOLASTIC DETH-Coll. CD: READ DAMN IT!
LORDS OF LIGHT-EP Original 3-man grind
THEY LIVE-LP: Cult-classic NY fastcore

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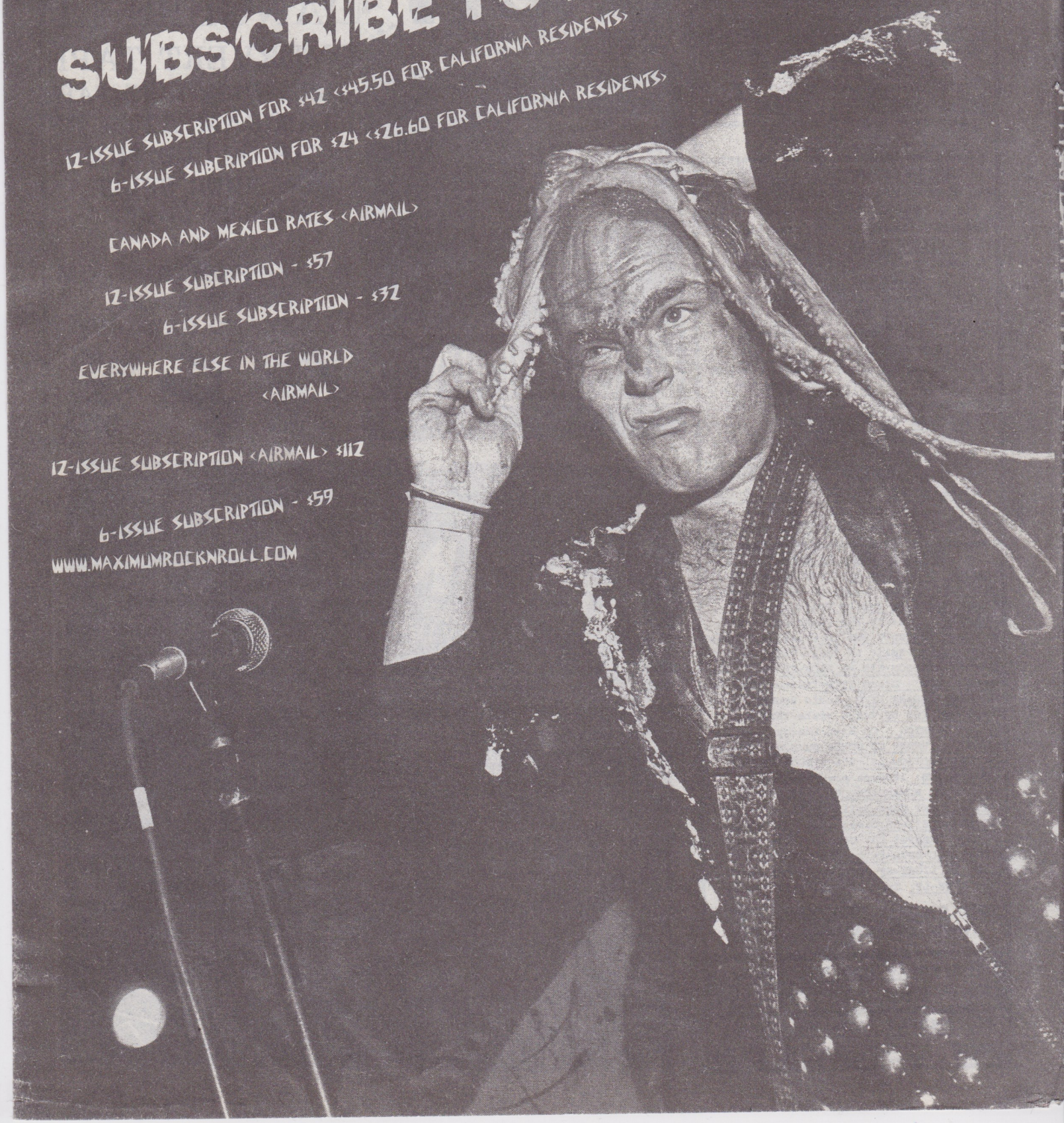
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